

H I N T S

REGARDING THE

EAST INDIA MONOPOLY;

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED

TO THE

British Legislature.

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Regarding the

EAST INDIA MONOPOLY.



WHEN an important and deeply interesting question has been long agitated and discussed, and the facts and circumstances by which it may be affected have been examined and considered in their various relations to, and bearings upon its object, we are not always best prepared for deciding upon its merits, or for acting conformably to its import. In many instances, investigation blunts our finest and highest perceptions, and the details which it brings to light overwhelm our clearest and most sublime views of duty and of interest. In this way, the animated feelings, which the prospect of a free trade to India had excited, have already been worn away, and our minds have been so exhausted and perplexed by the intricate labyrinth into which the Company's affairs have brought the general question, that those paramount considerations, those insuperable obligations, which the question itself implies, are in danger of being, if not absolutely forgot, at least generally overlooked. It is for the purpose of recalling these first and paramount impressions that the following hints are respectfully offered

CONCERNING the value of the trade, that must arise from direct intercourse with 450 millions of human beings, in different stages of civilization, and under every variety of circumstances, it is evidently unnecessary to descant. Every one who can think independently on the subject must be satisfied, that this value to such a commercial and industrious nation as ours now is, must be immense beyond our present comprehension. In the present state of Europe, it presents itself to our view under every advantage. It is against our trade that the animosity of this important quarter of the world is chiefly directed; if this can be placed beyond their reach, we may hope that their hostilities against us will be paralyzed, and their minds prepared to accept of the boon of commercial intercourse with us on free and equitable conditions; but until we can shew ourselves independent of their good-will in regard to this essential advantage, our suit for their favour will, in all human probability, be as ineffectual as it has been incessant.

It is customary for writers in service of the East India Company to set forth, as a counterbalancing consideration to these views, the peculiar character and dispositions of the inhabitants of the East, who, it is held, are so repugnant to change, and so tenacious of their own manners and customs, that all the blandishments of European intercourse would be lost upon them. To this, however, let it be answered, that the East India Company have no right whatever to limit our calculations by the present appearances of that trade. These have heretofore been formed under their influence, and circumscribed by their restrictive policy. At present, we have no other way of coming at the truth on this point but a scanty experience. From this, however, and from the enlarged apprehensions of the subject that arise out of its stupendous character, we perceive, that in truth, the field for commercial interprize in these remote regions is not only vast, but every way suited to our circum-

stances. It is a maxim that cannot be too strongly impressed on our minds, that it is only by exciting industrious propensities that wealth is to be procured; these propensities require free and equitable commerce for their excitation and support; and amidst nations in the most opposite circumstances and in the most different degrees of civilization, commerce, peculiarly lucrative and advantageous, cannot but take place the instant that their respective powers and resources can be made to bear effectually upon each other.

WHAT wonderful changes have taken place in these regions within our own days, and may not changes still more wonderful speedily follow? These nations, let it be remembered, are all deficient in the rudiments of improvement, particularly in the tools and instruments of agriculture, and we cannot but suppose, that emulous as they are of our attainments, they would refuse competent supplies of these. Such supplies, let it be noticed, it is a great and important branch of our national industry to produce. Out of the advantages resulting from such invaluable acquirements, may we not expect an aggregation of wealth, and of means favourable to improvement, and conducive to greater and higher commercial intercourse? Would not our industry gradually become concatenated with this progression of things, and the productions of these regions be rendered more and more subservient to our commercial wants? In the end might not a chain of trade every way correspondent to the wants and circumstances of each be produced? This comprizes no presumptuous view of our character; it is Britain that now gives to the world the standard of all that is excellent—it is to British manners and customs that all nations now conform themselves—Britain leads the fashion and gives the law, not merely in the tinsel of dress, but in the whole frame of social acquirements.

IN order to get quit of these powerful objections to their

monopolizing system, it has become customary with the partisans of the East India Company, to employ the cant word *methodism* to every project that implies improvement; and unhappily a false pride, arising from disgust at this epithet, has made many individuals stand off from their duty, when every moral and political consideration would have inclined them to advance. As I, for my part, am not at all concerned about this matter, I shall state my sentiments moral, civil or political, without any other apprehensions, except those which a profound reverence for the law and will of God, and the most ardent attachment to the best interests of my country necessarily suggest, and in place of eluding the difficulty that seems thus produced, I shall venture to meet it most steadily in the face.

Those who promulgate those alarms, which *methodism* and *colonization* are held to imply, must contend for one of three things—either that individuals, of a dangerous cast of character, will attach themselves to the native princes, and through their means and influence attempt to overthrow the British empire in the East—or, that the British population in a mass will, when greatly advanced in riches and strength, endeavour to dis sever this empire from the parent state—or, that in consequence of the headstrong turbulence of factional individuals, the tranquillity and prosperity of the general empire will be endangered, if wealth and improvement should ever become general in India. As these grounds of alarm are all directly repugnant to each other, it is impossible to set them forth otherwise than as apart. British subjects are not apt to throw up the invaluable blessings of their civil constitution, and to adventure their lives, fortunes and characters on a loose scale of action; and no one has any right to calculate on contingencies, that are inconsistent with the ordinary rules of human procedure.

Let it be supposed, in the first place, that certain evil

disposed Britons were to go over to the native princes, and by their intrigues and manœuvres, engage these in their project of expelling their countrymen from the peninsula, and as this is supposing a degree of perversity in the character of our countrymen, that has not heretofore been exemplified, it is certainly a bold supposition. Let us, however, suppose such a thing to have taken place, to an extent sufficient to excite both danger and dismay. What would be the consequence? If we look at the fate of Tippoo Saib, we have our answer. Such an attempt would kindle every latent principle of honor and patriotism in the hearts of our fellow subjects; these would spurn from their hearts every sympathetic and enfeebling regard, and rush into the fields of contest with the most enthusiastic valour. Tippoo had every advantage of this kind that he could desire, without the allay of the renegado principle here supposed; he had an immense empire, was in the zenith of military and political glory, was backed by all the influence that French principles and European tactics could afford. His fate, with all these advantages, will never be forgot in Hindostan. If, however, on some particular prince its influence should be lost, he, like Tippoo, would only bring down on himself that destruction that he meant to have hurled against us, and contribute to the exaltation of that empire which he vainly expected to have overthrown.

LET us now advert to the second supposition, and admit for a moment that the whole British population in India might coalesce their own divided interests, and succeed in organizing these vast regions under one independent sway. We are apt to give way to such a suspicion, because when America had begun to feel her strength and importance, she served us in this very way. But the British residents in Hindostan are not at all in the same circumstances with the American colonists. They may bear some resemblance to our countrymen in the West Indies, and to the Creoles in

South America, where the European population has always more to fear from the indigenous inhabitants than from the misgovernance of the mother country. British subjects in India, however, have little in common with the American revolutionists. America from the first was peopled by a robust intrepid race of men, all of one high independent cast of character: their climate, their employments, and their circumstances all served to unfold their inherent qualities, and to prepare them for one great revolutionary development. But the condition of residents in Hindostan, like their character, is the very reverse of all this. Before any great revulsion can take place amongst them, deep contrivance, and a thorough preparation would be necessary, all of which our immense contiguous settlements and possessions, joined to our established and consolidated power in these regions, would be ready to circumvent and traverse.

But it may be said, our expatriated brethren would be able to make the indigenous inhabitants form a common cause with them. This, with due submission, is inferring, that Britons will through time so degrade themselves, as to prefer the tameness of Indian existence, to the noble boldness of their native regions—that they will run the risk of having their high pretensions set aside, and that of being absorbed under Indian institutions—that they will contentedly plunge themselves into a desperate conflict, for the sake of unbridled Asiatic indulgence, and in order to get rid of those ennobling exercises, in which their high character consists, coalesce with a race of men whom they now despise—and that with such dispositions so debased and so enervated, they will retain energy sufficient to lay the foundation of a vast empire, to endow its incongruous parts with one national impulse, and to bring forth its resources under one redoubted sway. All this, let it be remarked, is to be done in the view of dissevering themselves from their parent stem, in whose unlimited resources alone their peculiar prowess

resides, a prowess so potent, that while acting under its influence, every man of them possesses vigor sufficient to command the services of the thousands, by whom he is beset. What but infatuated effeminacy could contemplate such a revulsion without horror ! and what energy is there to be dreaded in such deplorable infatuation !

THE alarms, implied in the third supposition, have partizans even among the advocates for a free trade. It is not, these say, the treachery nor the revulsion of their countrymen, if placed under auspices favourable for improvement, that they dread, but the corruption and imbecility of our own executive government, and the headstrong turbulence to which, British residents may thereupon be driven. These, they alledge, would, if not most imperiously restrained, throw the affairs of the nation into disorder, and embroil the best interests of the country. 'This is a theme which too many of our countrymen are disposed to chime, but it is one, in which the topics for reprehension lead to conclusions the most opposite from what is here intended. Every one knows that there is a vast difference betwixt the temperament of an Indian and that of a Briton, but few make the allowances that are necessary to ascertain the character and the consequences of this difference ; the asperity of the one grates upon our ears, the timidity of the other beguiles our senses. The first, however, is bold and generous, the last perfidious and distrustful ; he will neither give nor receive those kind offices that indicate a sound disposition of mind, while the other, amidst all his inequalities, is incessantly giving powerful displays of the strength and worth of his essential endowments. This is a conclusive, and it is an irresistible argument in favour of a liberal policy in regard to our own countrymen ; and when it is duly weighed, it must inspire confidence alike in our brethren abroad, our government, and our establishments. It suits the views of certain partizans, as well as it does those of

the East India Company, to repel such inferences ; but this cannot be done, without denying the existence of all those blessings and advantages that we individually and nationally enjoy, and giving the preference to a system of things which none of us can contemplate without disgust.

THESE remarks may be held to be a sufficient answer to mere cavillings and surmises, that have their foundation in jealousy and misapprehension. It is the business of but too many to vilify the peculiarities of our countrymen, that thereby they may degrade our peculiar institutions in the eyes of the world. To reason with such is unnecessary ; it is enough to appeal to facts that cannot be disputed. What is it that upholds the whole frame of society in which we are enveloped, that amidst turmoils and difficulties elicits the most sublime indications of human character ? Is it not our holy religion, and the institutions by which its influences are diffused ? We must not suppose, that because the doctrines of Christianity are so generally treated with disrespect, that therefore their power has ceased to unfold itself. There is scarcely a person amongst us, the most profligate and the most impious, whose character has not been affected by it, and who is not, though in spite of himself, made instrumental in diffusing its best blessings. Every thing around us has at one time or other been subjected to the power and influence of Christianity, and retains more or less of its powerful impress : the provisions for education as well as those for the maintenance of the helpless ; the laws and usages of polite society, as well as the forms and ceremonies of religious worship, all partake of its mild beneficent character, and diffuse advantages that are conformable to its laws. By these things the conduct of men is necessarily regulated, by them also their temper and character is generally formed ; they have raised the character and circumstances of the European community above those of all the other nations of the world, and all the nations of anti-

quity, and they are necessary to uphold these in their exalted situation.

THAT the influences here referred to have entered deeply into the temperament of our countrymen, cannot be doubted. It was these that moderated the various revolutions of Britain, so opposite both in their operations and in their results to the revolutions of other countries. With the follies, but not with the crimes that attended these revolutions the fatuities of religionists may be chargeable; for it is a fact, that deserves our most serious regard, that even amidst the height of delusion, the restraints laid on the passions of men by our holy faith were obviously the preservatives from much mischief. No such scenes as those that took place in France, in St. Domingo; no St. Bartholomew's Day, no Sicilian Vespers cloud our history: ebullitions of mistaken loyalty, of undue devotion to a particular party and to particular tenets, took place then, as they take place daily under our eye, but unless the star of infidelity shall rear its head, and the sunshine of Christian truth set in the shade, we will continue to find, as we have always heretofore found, that not only genuine contrition will defecate occasional perversity, but that sympathetic and benevolent feelings will predominate even in our most infuriate dissensions. These characteristic sentiments, let it be noticed, are not confined to one class of men, they pervade the whole community. The fatuous Turks and the bigotted Spaniards and Portuguese are witnesses of the fact, and in their harmonious co-operation with our meanest hinds, acknowledge the superior lustre of British benignity. Can we then seriously dread revulsion from the mild and placid tribes of Hindostan, coalesced under our governance, who have so much cause to venerate our institutions, and so many inducements to confide in our national character? We perceive our name and nation looked up to with respectful homage by those who are nationally most averse both from these and from our

religion and national policy ; and will we fear lest the gratings of our peculiar asperities, the uncouthness of our personal manners, sink that magnanimity and power out of sight, while the blessings that are connected with them are so fully enjoyed ?

THERE is one way of securing the good-will and riveting the affections of our fellow subjects in the East, and there is but one, and that is, by making them duly sensible of the blessings that they enjoy under our protection. It is not by impressing them with an idea that we will at all events respect and nurture their prejudices and their institutions ; that rather than be deficient in complacency to these, we will like the Dutch trample the ensign of our own peculiar faith at their feet, or like the Americans plead our abortion from the European commonwealth. If we should thus bend all that is peculiarly our own at their feet, every act and circumstance of our lives would disclose the hollowness of our pretensions ; our tameness would provoke their alject hostility, and give unbounded effect to that subtle line of policy that is so suitable to their character. It is by governing wisely and exercising our authority with fidelity, resolution and intrepidity, that our institutions and our interests will come to be all alike respected, and not by dropping the one in favour of the other ; it is by limiting our power by maxims drawn from discrete, magnanimous and extended views of our whole circumstances and obligations, that this respect, and that correspondent good-will, which are so much coveted, will be alike procured. Whatever the inhabitants of these distant regions may think of us, let us beware, that they never entertain the idea that we are bound to lower ourselves under their feeble phantasies ; for if they should, ~~while~~ we forfeited our character for courage and ~~candour~~, we would place these phantasies in that very throne which we, and all that is our own, are called to occupy. It was ~~not~~ by sacrificing their own peculiar tenets to the pre-

judices of the multitude that the Mahometan's dynasty became established ; and it is not by so doing that our security is to be obtained. These bickerings and dissensions that sound so loud and appear so threatening when religion is named, form no part of its pure essence ; they are ebullitions from its surface, but they feel the restraints of its influence, and like the ragings of the windy storm, they alarm those most who are least implicated in their consequences—like the tempest, too, as they tend to pass off impurities that might become pestilential, they excite alarms that will presently subside and be at rest.

I HAVE been the more particular on this point, because it seems to be much misapprehended. We are alarmed lest Christianity and civilization, by making too rapid progress in India, endanger the stability of our empire, while the fact is, that we have too much reason to fear, that though our utmost efforts were used, the progress of these would be but tardy. It is above two hundred years since we began the civilization of the Irish under similar prejudices, and though our national exertions thereto have been immense, we have no reason to vaunt of our success. Improvement presupposes high mental as well as great and incessant corporeal exercise ; it subsumes a sense of the value, and a taste for the enjoyments of refined life, and it subsumes also a disposition and a predetermination to submit to the exercises and privations that are necessary for their attainment. For these reasons, in spite of all the blessings felt to be connected with it, we are tardy in our progress towards improvement ; nay, we frequently fall back in the way. Have we any reason to believe that the Hindoo forms any exception to the general rule ? Quite the reverse. Mahometanism, with all its allurements, has not in the course of many centuries received any considerable accession of strength.

WE are accordingly brought back to the point from which

we started, the institution of a good general system. To appoint proper deputies for exercising the powers of legitimate authority, is an important object, and it is one in which perhaps, there has been seldom much to complain of; but it is a matter of still greater importance, to institute a proper plan of superintendence, to secure vigilance, and enforce accountability. I have sometimes been of opinion, that this matter was in a manner prepared to our hands. Our own plan of executive government seems to have arisen out of the regular exercise of its ordinary functions, and some such plan might be adopted in India. Let our object be not so much the punishment, as the prevention of evil; let the council of each Governor General, those whom he was bound to consult, and whose advice he was under the necessity of following, in all extraordinary occasions, besides comprising some of his confidential friends, comprehend the heads of the department, of finance, of the army and navy, of the colonial and commercial interests, of the judiciary and civil authority, and then we may rest assured, that he never can act without competent information; and let the heads of these departments be amenable not only to government, both abroad and at home, but to the legislature for their transactions, and then too I apprehend we can have few fears about the execution of their respective duties.

I AM far, however, from setting down this or any other plan as a general rule, I mention this plan merely because it exhibits one, wherein, the exact fulfilment of every obligation, and the most complete accountability can be comprised, and one that is alike simple in its apprehension, and in its application. My object, at present, is not to exhibit a model, but to evince the fact, that there is nothing in the circumstances of the case that can make the changes about to be induced by a *free trade*, either momentous or alarming; and if the evils to be dreaded do not render an abolition of

the monopoly impolitic, surely the advantages obviously to be derived therefrom ought to lead to that measure.

THE greatest difficulty consists in adjusting the claims of the East India Company. Here too there is one way, and but one of meeting the objection. We must, and we may admit them in their full legitimate extent ; but we must qualify the admission with declaring, that all these claims, whatever they are, are mere matters of indemnity and compensation. Without this qualification, we must be contending, that British subjects may institute sovereignties, independent of the state, and that the East India Company is one of these sovereignties. But we all know that no British subject has any right so to do, nor any ground of claim whatever, that stands on a higher footing than that of indemnity ; and that with this right held in security, he can insist on the most ample amends. The right of resolving claims in this way, it is evident, can be exercised by the state alone—only for the sake of great and substantial public advantage, and no farther than this advantage imperiously requires. In those cases, wherein the exercise of this power is necessary, it is no less the duty of the state to accord, than of the individual to claim, not only complete indemnity, but the most absolute deference to all his personal rights which still remain in reserve.

THIS point, I apprehend, must be held to be incontrovertible, and being thus determined, the adjustment of every other matter becomes both easy and simple. The first thing that demands our regard is the claims which the British nation now set forth, what is their limits, and what the extent of the concessions that the company must be prevailed on to accord. That the exercise of sovereignty in all its ramifications must be resumed by the king, in case of a free trade is self-evident—for British residents in India, in that case, will not be the servants of the Company as they now

are, and governed by restrictive regulations, but the subjects of the crown, and as such governed by the established laws of Britain. That this free trade ought to be exercised in all its branches is in my opinion equally manifest, from our circumstances and obligations. Our national trade and industry are sunk into dependence on rival and hostile nations, and they have at length become paralyzed from the multitude of misfortunes under which they have fallen, and by which they are still incessantly beset. Our whole population, and the value of all our national resources are in consequence falling off rapidly, both in real efficiency and in political importance. Duties, that call for our greatest strength, our highest exertions, in the meantime press upon us ; and we are in a manner driven to the East for an excitation and support to our industrious propensities. There, an unbounded field for commercial enterprise presents itself, there, wealth unexplored, and means ascertained sufficient to reanimate all our faculties, and to keep them for ages in full exercise, present themselves ; and there too, the interposition of private capital, and of private traders, has called in the assistance of foreigners to meet duties and enjoy advantages that are peculiarly our own.

In betaking ourselves to this resource, we are only availing ourselves of an advantage that has been long withheld from us. This defalcation of ours has not only excluded us for ages from the exercise of many indisputable and essential rights, but it has armed the individuals who have availed themselves of it, with much dangerous and hurtful power ; they have not only drawn up these unalienable rights, and the transcendent prowess that has resulted from them, under banners hostile to our best interests ; but they have inverted the energy thus procured, against ourselves ; and so immured themselves in privileges, that we dare not, or cannot bring them to the bar of common equity, for their misapplication of our resources. This is a matter that cannot

be disguised. Nay, such is the patronage enjoyed by the East India Company, that in all ordinary cases, the renovation of its charter would have passed again. At length, however, its financial difficulties have made it necessary for it to throw itself in the arms of the country: the necessities of the landed, the commercial, and the funded interests now loudly call for relief: to these the wants of the state and of the community at large, give redoubled efficacy. In the meantime the monopolists paralyzed, giving way, and yielding up powers that are unprofitable, and even hurtful, perceive that though by abandoning their power, they alter their condition, they are under no necessity, either to lower their character, or to forfeit any of those honors and privileges, that are really estimable, and that they can exercise with advantage to themselves or the country. This, I apprehend, is the real state of things, at present, and, under these views, the value and the extent of the claims and pleas of all parties may, I think, be satisfactorily adjusted. The interest of all parties are prepared to coalesce; they are kept asunder by certain feelings and misconceptions, but these ought not to prevent an equitable arrangement.

In my opinion, the situation of the East India Company, at this moment, is somewhat analogous to that of the feudal aristocracy, when civil improvement first made way for the advancement of the lower class of the community. Like this body of men, at that eventful epoch, they have before them a change which no exertions of their own can obviate or prevent. The mass of the people are struggling for a participation in that wealth and influence which the company has so long enjoyed, and the government is anxious to resume that power and patronage, from which it has heretofore been excluded. The Company is exceedingly lothe to part with possessions and dignities that have in a sense become prescribed in its hands; part with these, however it must, or greater evils will ensue. If its struggles are systematic and successful, it may preserve to itself something like the

feudal domination, that in the end obtained the ascendancy in Poland and Germany; wherein, the patrician order, by depressing alike the supreme power and the people, contrived to maintain their predominancy at the expence of the welfare of the nation. But if the matter is compromised in the way that was done in regard to that domination in England and in France, the interests of all parties may be promoted and not at all repressed by the change.

At present an opportunity of meeting the exigencies of the country, and of obtaining effectual relief to themselves, is laid open to the East India proprietors. The country demands access to those regions of enterprise that are locked up under their hands. The certain consequence of obtaining this access is the introduction of improvement, wealth and security into their territorial domains. It is necessary that the state lay hold of the reins of this vast empire, not so much for the sake of the change that is apprehended, as of that which has been already induced. But, in thus depriving these proprietors of their honors and immunities, the state relieves them of their burdens, extends its strong arm around their possessions, and gives redoubled efficacy to that spirit of enterprise which there, as in England and America, must necessarily augment and substantiate the value of their immense possessions. In such circumstances, is it the duty or is it the interest of the proprietors to be tenacious of their prescribed superiority, or to let it fall into the hands of the state, for the sake of the equivalent that will thereby be prepared by their hands? In being tenacious, they risk their own immediate concerns, they incur double responsibility in the eyes of the country, and they contribute to the general calamity of the nation, a calamity, in which they themselves must ultimately participate. On the other hand, by letting their prescribed honors fall into the hands of those who are disposed to make the best use of them, they relieve themselves from a mass of cares and burdens, they re-

solve all these, and all their hazards into those of the state, they will call for the thanks, and they will merit the gratitude of their country, and contribute thereby to raise it, and all their connexions, to a condition that will enable and dispose them, and all parties to seek their welfare as benefactors. By following out this latter train of conduct, the East India proprietors, like the ancient English barons, must unquestionably find the value of all those possessions, and of all those privileges that it is competent for them regularly to enjoy, augmented beyond all calculation. Thereby, also, they may obtain financial relief and territorial revenue from subjects, that would have otherwise been unproductive. If the Company could take a clear and extended view of its own situation and advantages, I apprehend, that it would view the denouement that is thus prepared for it, as a consummation every way most desirable.

THERE are a variety of stations in a system so vast, that might give occupation to a body so great, so rich, and so powerful, as the East India Company. India has a territorial interest particularly her own, which an aristocracy so great might well devote itself to the charge of. The commerce, thence induced, must require the interposition of a financial establishment furnished with resources both at home and abroad, thus redoubled and thus extended. The vast national enterprises, martial, maritime and political, of an empire so important and immense, could not be better disposed of, than in charge to a political body, so deserving of confidential regard. In all or in any of these, the talents and resources of the company might find employment, much more suitable and much more lucrative, than that of conquering and governing countries which must sooner or latter be taken out of its hands. It is by these very means, (it must be noticed,) that the value and the importance of all its assets and investments would be most successfully substantiated, realized and resolved into tangible and divisible effects, and that

a species of political power and importance, with commensurate wealth and means, would result from its character and situation, most consistent with individual interest.

As to the commercial and political difficulties that may be devolved upon the nation, by unrestrained intercourse to the East, these, whatever they may turn out to be, ought not to discompose us. There is a season when nations like individuals may put forth their whole strength, not only without danger, but with manifest advantage; and surely the vigor and energy of the British government and people, exhibited by them on every suitable occasion, cannot make us estimate any difficulties that can here present themselves, matters of much importance. Patriotism and loyalty, courage and perseverance, the qualities of all others the most necessary for surmounting obstacles and resolving advantages, into general good, were never so prevalent, and never so successfully displayed in our nation as at present. Our capital and ingenuity, our industry and enterprise, and our resources, faculties and powers, abetted by our naval prowess and military force, and by the exalted character of our government, and supported by the immense territorial acquisitions and resources that have at length been subjected to our sway in those very regions, ought to raise us above all suspicions on this head. Such means and such powers must bear down every appearance of obstruction, and nothing but a restricted and perverse line of policy can prevent their raising our name and nation to the highest pitch of advancement. These attainments are immense, but as they are noways incommensurate with our innate staminal vigor, they may be exercised without abatement. Holland and Portugal, Venice and Genoa severally, had possessions every way more disproportionate to their native power; and it was not by their extension, but by their corruption and oppression that their fate was blighted. It becomes us, like Rome, to assimilate to our character all that has become our own;

and then, like Rome, though the whole earth should fall under our sway, its improvement and our own radical strength and superiority would only be the more effectually established and confirmed.

It is not at all meant to say, that nothing like difficulty, or obstacle, or disappointment will appear in the expansion of commerce and industry, that is here supposed. On the contrary, in such an extended scale of action, we must expect that these will increase; but unless our character shall rapidly degenerate, obstruction will only be the prelude to triumph, difficulty to higher attainments, and disappointment to more severe and arduous preparations. Let it be recollected, that every new commercial attainment will not only constitute a trophy to the British name, but form the means for farther attainments,—that every new indication of improvement thus procured will not only augment our resources, but tend to the stability of those already obtained, and thus confirm our commercial ascendancy amongst the nations,—and that every development of this ascendancy will prove a spring to the advancement of our personal characters. It is not for a moment to be admitted, that our constituted powers are incompetent to the formation of a system of regulations suited to such increasing power, nor that imbecillity of mind and feebleness of conception will prevent the nation from availing itself fully of such advantages, as is but too frequently admitted. On the contrary, taking for my rule, those high displays of personal prowess, and of force of character, that have taken place in the navy and other fields of enterprize, and wherever a fair and full opportunity has offered, I must contend, that our national character has not yet sufficiently developed itself, that it is still in a state of pupilage, and that a more ample range is necessary for its full exercise and denouement.

I AM aware that these remarks will alarm a certain class

of the community, respectable alike for their character and for their influence. *It may be apprehended, that the national means and the national power will be squandered away under presumptuous ideas of our importance, in wild attempts at fanciful reformation ; that unprofitable and unwarranted undertakings will become prevalent ; or at any rate that our strength and potency, now so consolidated and so stable, may be exhausted and attenuated from the effects of mere extension. It must be remembered, however, that all this time it must be held that the arm and authority of one government surmounts the whole, that these will not be idle or listlessly set aside, but on the contrary, be proportionally active and vigilant, and be strenuously and incessantly exercised in repressing unlawful and unwarranted undertakings. Undue assumptions of wealth and pretensions to importance will in this way be immediately exposed.*

In the case supposed, however, there is a check upon unwarranted speculation that can exist in no other instance. In a trade that admits of exchanges in a manner under one's eye, the prospect of factitious support, from obligations that are transmissible, may decoy the unwary into various improper transactions. It is well known, that extensive shipments of invaluable commodities have been frequently made, for the sake of the financial accommodation to be obtained from drawbacks of debentures and from advances on consignment ; and that these, in certain instances, have been continued to such an extent, that the wealth of particular communities have been consigned to destruction, in the pursuit of financial relief. In the case before us, however, every thing of this kind is impossible : no financial accommodation can be drawn from a trade, wherein a couple of years must intervene betwixt the outset and the return. A person engaging in it must be possessed of a capital equal to the whole amount that is adventured, and this capital he must have completely under his command. As this arises from the nature of the case, it forms a bar to unwarranted enterprize

that cannot be obviated. Nor is this all: as this very circumstance must induce caution and mature preparation, it will drive mere adventurers out of the trade, and it will allure men of real capital and experience into it. These will not rashly consign their property into an improper channel of trade, nor increase its extent beyond its due bounds.

OF the effects, resulting from such extended intercourse, upon the character and general circumstances of the state and nation, some apprehensions may be obtained from viewing our peculiar attainments and situation. Our nation is in every sense founded on the sea; we are an immense maritime, mercantile, industrious people, connected together by the instrumentality of naval and commercial influence. Our native isle is placed in the centre betwixt our North American and Eastern territories. These countries, so opposite to each other in character and circumstances, while they supply us with their peculiar riches, are governed and subjected not less by superior policy and incessant intercourse, than by our established sovereignty and paramount influence. A vast navy, and vast territorial advantages, resources and energies are necessary to us, and they are prepared for us, but they are only to be obtained in the way of free unrestrained commerce, and as they are to be obtained, so they must be diffused and possessed in this way, and in no other. With the advantage of such a navy, such intercourse, extended and invigorated by such means and resources, we approximate the most distant corners of our empire to each other; we make each feel and enjoy the strength and advantages of the whole; we consolidate their aggregate powers, under our immediate authority.

THESE remarks are set down, because they bring into view a variety of important considerations in regard to the true value of unrestricted commercial intercourse. It is by it, and by it alone, that the invaluable productions of our

Asiatic territories are to be accommodated to our service, and produced of such qualities and in such quantities as to besit our purposes. Silk, cotton, indigo, and a variety of precious gums and dyewoods, fitted for our manufactures; hemp, saltpetre, and other naval and warlike stores; for competent supplies of which we are at present dependent on foreign powers, might be all obtained within our own domains, if a free trade, supported by a liberal and extended line of policy in regard to our distant possessions, were adopted. At present, the quality of Indian productions is generally marred through want of skill and attention, and the quantity produced noways commensurate to that which is requisite to meet our manufacturing exigencies. Nothing but the solicitude and perseverance of the resident British capitalist can reach the source of the evil here noticed; and such a personage cannot exist and exercise his ameliorating functions, without perfect freedom and security in regard to his personal and political interests. Here, the cry of methodism and colorization may again be raised; but will any one say, that there is more danger in binding the inhabitants of these countries to us by a sense of interest, than by the repulsive fetters of constraint; in inspiring them with love and confidence in our paternal solicitude for their concerns, than in compressing them under our authority by means of distrustful and alienating restrictions. At present, notwithstanding the improved state of our own manufactures, the old round of fabricating silk and cotton goods, without abatement and without reserve, is kept agoing in India, although these, so far from supplying our wants, materially traverse and interfere with the most necessary means for their supply. How in such circumstances can commercial intercourse become profitable? It belongs to the ingenuity and industry of the British capitalist, informed by science and impelled by system, to divert trade from this unnatural channel, to resolve its whole force against hostile competitors, and to render it necessary for our neighbours

and for foreign connexions, to subject their commercial system to fair and equitable principles.

But besides the advantages resulting from improving the native productions of India, and accommodating these to our purposes, direct intercourse with India would prepare the natives for higher exercises under our immediate influence. For my part, I can see no good reason for debarring ourselves from their services in the army, in every department of foreign duty that offers. What consumpt of British subjects, does the garrisoning of our West India Islands occasion? How many thousand brave warriors might be at our disposal, if our colonial expeditions could be supported by recruits from Hindostan? In this way we might infuse the ardor and zeal of loyalty into the hearts of our dusky fellow subjects; these we might make beat with enthusiasm in our common cause; we might exercise the zeal and ardor thus produced, towards great common objects under one great influence, and by advancing them effectually in our own system; exalt our general system in the scale of nations. This is no trifling consideration. Every Russian Emperor may not be as magnanimous as Alexander. If a Bonaparte should ever sit on the throne that commands the source of our supplies of naval stores, he might feel as little difficulty in advancing over the Scandinavian territory to the Northern seas, as Bonaparte himself felt in crossing the states on the Rhine. In such a case, the dernier resort here referred to, would be invaluable; but it would only be invaluable in so far as attachment to us was secured by kindred regards. If in this point we are deficient, in some critical posture of our affairs, the power or influence of our enemy may invert against ourselves, the whole force thus in reserve, with more ease than we could manage it. At present a fair and a full opportunity of drawing it forth, and organizing it under our own influence is within our grasp; this opportunity lost, another equally favourable may never return.

I HAVE been the more particular upon the subject of civilizing India, because it appears to me to form the key-stone of all our attainments. If we can accomplish this object, we will have effectually brought under our sway, an empire every way superior to that of Bonaparte; its population and its territory being alike invaluable in themselves, and correspondent to our circumstances. Let India but be civilized, or rather identified with the parent system, and we have at once direct and complete access to all the wealth and commerce of the whole Eastern world. India, however, must in the first place, be exercised under this character; its industry must be concatenated with ours, and its hopes and fortunes linked with the results of this connexion. Our manufacturers derive immense advantage from Jews and pedlars on the European continent. Our merchants may have a similar advantage in Asia where this is necessary; but by following out the outline now drawn, our commerce in this quarter will come to rest on higher ground.

BUT say they, there is a difficulty and a danger in attempting or even abetting the civilization of India. There is manifest danger in trusting one's self in a bark upon the waves, or to guidance derived from information drawn from the magnetic needle; similar danger is produced in exploding a cannon, and in condensing steam; but by observing in each particular case the necessary rules, every danger is so completely dispelled, that the merest novice will not startle. When the powers thus obtained have been duly improved, arranged, attended, concentrated and properly directed, they give the most momentous results. It was by dint of power derived from the successful application of steam to useful purposes, that the national wealth and power, by which Britain has been able to impede the progress of French principles, has been procured. It was by dint of the force, derived from the application of gun-powder to warlike purposes, that Mahometanism was by the Divine

goodness arrested in its progress westward; and, it is by the superior prowess that results from a concentration of all the improvements made in naval tactics, that the blessings of peace and security are now and have been so often preserved to the world by the power of Britain. There is a danger no doubt in attempting to civilize India, and if we manage the business violently and remissly by turns, as the French revolutionists managed the ebullitions that took place in France twenty years ago, the danger may be great; but shall we therefore say, with our eyes open to the consequences, with our government, our institutions, our resources, and every man at his post, that the civilization of India gradually rising up under our hands, will create any thing like peculiar danger or difficulty?

LET us next direct our attention to the advantages and consequences that must flow to our China trade, from the adoption of a liberal system, in regard to Hindostan. It is proposed to reserve the China trade to the East India Company, which it must be noticed, is not only a trade that is most lucrative, but one that is most susceptible of extension and improvement, provided only a liberal policy in regard to our general trade be resorted to. It is said that the character of the Chinese, and the principles of their government, render this reservation on the whole both prudent and advantageous. The matter, I apprehend, briefly stands thus. The government of China is as systematically repugnant to our nation, and to all intercourse with it, as that of Bonaparte, and it tolerates no more foreign trade, than what in existing circumstances is indispensibly necessary. On the other hand, the inhabitants of that country are as alert in the pursuit of gain, and as friendly to trade as any other people on the face of the globe. On our part, neither the government nor the nation conceal their partiality to this trade. The question with us accordingly turns out to be—how are we to remove these jealousies, and that captiousness

on the part of the Chinese government, which is the great bar to this intercourse? The question is no doubt important, and somewhat delicate, but as I do not pretend to be possessed of the means that are necessary to make all its circumstances bear upon their object, I shall content myself with adverting to a few particulars, that in my opinion, ought to set the matter at rest, whatever way the general tendency of circumstances may happen to point.

We have an immense and invaluable empire in the East: this empire is supported by our national character, and by our maritime prowess. How are these to be maintained in full vigor? Is it by lowering ourselves in a way, that we would not do in regard to France, Russia, or America? The government of China no doubt does not invade our territory, or those of our allies; it does not preclude our commerce, by sweeping spoliative decrees; but it lays bonds on our exercise of a general right, which no other power has as yet attempted; it tolerates no more intercourse with us, than suits its own occasions, it represses with a high hand what transgresses these limits, and it respects neither our persons nor our properties, when these become obnoxious to its views. These are assumptions of sovereignty that perhaps we ought not and will not impugn. They are beacons to our progress; but they must not prevent us from availing ourselves of every fair and lawful advantage that comes in our way. There is no friendship shewn to us that can embarrass our movements, or paralyze our efforts in the course to which by the above circumstances we are impelled.

WHAT would the most conciliating dispositions lead us to do? That we must have a free trade of some kind in the neighbourhood of China is a point, about which none can cavil, seeing that the possessions of the British crown in that quarter have become so important as to render this unavoidable. How then are we, in the way of giving effect to a monop-

ly of the China trade, to preclude intercourse betwixt these settlements and China? It must be recollected that it is not enough to preclude intercourse betwixt British residents and the port of Canton; the indigenous inhabitants of all these settlements, the Chinese themselves, and every foreign nation must be laid under a similar restraint, in order to put a stop to indirect trade with China. As no restrictions to be enforced ashore that can be devised, though executed in the most strenuous manner, could effectually preserve the monopoly to our privileged Company from infraction, unless along with these, the right of search at sea was established; shall we, or can we, transfer to the Company this right? Let it be recollected, that this search must be instituted in the view of conciliating the Chinese. Will it have this tendency? Just the reverse: it will exasperate their animosity and jealousy almost to distraction. It will fill their minds, and the minds of every other nation of the East with frenzy against our naval power. Into what effects such exasperations might lead, it is impossible to conjecture; it affects the tenderest part of national honor, as well as the most essential interests of the people. Animosity of this kind is seldom restrained by forms; for it is not so much the sense of the privation that is inflicted, as the acrimony that must be engendered by constant efforts to traverse the enjoyment of natural rights for a pitiful object, which neither equity nor sound policy can justify.

It may be explained, that no other trade will be included in the monopoly, but that betwixt the parent country and China; that all other trade will be left to its course, and that this restricted trade being confined to the port of London, no infraction can be made upon this monopoly.

Before this explanation is received, I would ask two questions. First, what is to become of the solicitude to conciliate the Chinese government that was advanced so pro-

minently? What provisions are to be made to prevent dissensions betwixt British subjects in the East, and that vindictive government? Would it not be more consistent with British honor and safety, to preserve the whole charge of its whole affairs in its own hands, amenable to law, and responsible to the authority of the state, and to lay down such rules and regulations as would implicate all the matters to be taken charge of, those of the parent state, as well as those of our fellow subjects abroad? This surely could be done merely by instituting a board or factory at Canton, as is done in other countries; one laid under most precise discipline, so as in effect to bring every British subject and all his affairs to the requisite extent, under most absolute control: the regulations thereto necessary being enforced by penalties, prompt and severe, which would be every way appropriate and commensurate with the circumstances of the case. Reports to the proper boards, and a refusal of protection or connexion, would be severe punishments in that quarter of the globe; yet by means of these alone, if it was necessary, a set of sumptuary enactments, as precise as those adopted in the army or navy might, under such authority, be most exactly maintained. Can the Company do more than this? It certainly cannot. The drift of the explanation set up is not therefore the removal of the superinduced difficulty, but the adaptation of it to the views of the East India Company. Nothing is thereby proposed for conciliating the good-will of the Chinese government and people, that is not much more completely attainable under the direct management of the crown. The honour and interests of the vast contiguous domains of Britain are left as unprotected as when they consisted of a few solitary forts. Let it not be pretended, therefore, that it is on account of any necessity in the case, or because there is no alternative, when the matter is so evidently arranged to suit the views of this great mercantile body. While we remember that the stake which we have in this business is most important, let us consider

that it is not by a timid deference to a fanciful importance, it is not by nurturing capricious prejudices, that the cordial good-will or friendship of this government is to be obtained ; it is by exhibiting in a true and full light, the loyalty, generosity, benignity, and intrepidity of our character, and by illustrating at once the sincerity and the strength of the principles out of which these qualities arise. This must be done directly by the state and nation themselves, and not through the medium of mercantile and interested agents. Thereby we will merit esteem, and if after all, jealousy and prejudice should prevail, we will be able to bear up under it in a way becoming our national dignity and fortitude.

The second question I would ask those who propose this explanation is, do they really know the value of the sacrifice that they are demanding of us, and have the India proprietors substantial grounds for such a demand ? I am far from questioning their right or title to every valuable consideration that can be resolved into property of any kind ; what I wish to know is, if there is any thing in their circumstances that can merit or constitute a ground of claim for such sacrifices. It must be admitted that there is nothing.

It is proposed too to preclude the out-ports from the principal advantages of this trade, for the sake of the public revenue. It may be very true, that in the port of London, where this business has been long and thoroughly established, a variety of facilities and advantages will be found prepared for the collection of public imposts, that exist nowhere else. But is there any peculiar difficulty in collecting the taxes on tea, and enforcing all the enactments regarding this trade, in Liverpool, Glasgow or Cork, that may not be obviated ? No one can maintain that there is. Why then are the out-ports to be deprived of this trade ? The port of London will certainly draw into it its own proportion of the tea trade, without the aid of any monopoly ; why therefore would we

deprive the out-ports of a similar advantage? There can be no good reason given. Having thus repelled their plea, we have a right to notice, that in these arrangements, the East India Company drop the question about methodism and colonization, and substitute that about the revenue. They are prepared to let the civilization of India take its course, and persons, objects and commodities to be shipped off thither according as the matter can be arranged betwixt government and individuals, provided only that the consignations homewards come under their influence. This simple illusion of theirs throws the light of day on all the fears about methodism, and anxieties about his Majesty's revenue. Their hue and cry is seen to be of the same cast of character with Bonaparte's zeal about the freedom of the seas, a bugbear to ward off investigations that would lead into the most mortifying results.

The great advantage of a free trade to Britain is its tendency to draw forth her resources, and to exercise on these her energies, and this can only be obtained by admitting trade freely into every quarter of the nation, and scattering its advantages over the land, and thus bringing forward under its influences all our various faculties of improvement. It is not at all necessary that each port should be directly embarked in it; this, from the extensive custom-house arrangements which in such trade is requisite, we know to be impossible; but it is necessary that direct trade should be laid open to all the great commercial avenues, so that no one set of our great national resources, and no one description of our capitalists may be excluded from it. In this way, our whole trade will be enlarged, and if one port gets more East India trade than the rest, it will most probably drop some part of its other trade in their favour. Every one of us sees aggregations of capital and ingenuity of resources and energies either hopelessly thrown aside, or inconsiderately dashed against each other from the mere want of an appro-

private destination. This evil can only be remedied by attending the market, and by making that market bear with full and direct force on these invaluable objects. This evil, however, we are called on to submit to, to suit the views of the East India Company. Let us consider the value of the advantage to be thus abandoned for their sake.

THE landed interests are deeply concerned in this matter. As things now stand with us, the welfare and security of the landed interest, comprizing our whole peerage and independent local interest, is completely identified with that of the commercial and manufacturing part of the community. There is a vast proportion of the landed interest directly concerned in trade, and in investments that derive their whole value from the support that they receive from trade. Of those landholders who are not thus involved in business, perhaps there is not one who has not friends, dependents and connexions who are engaged in trade, to an extent sufficient to interest him. These things constitute a ligament of attachment betwixt this important class of the community and the trading class, that is of no slender description. But besides this, the increased value, that must be permanently attached to their lands from an increase of trade, is such as to render this class in fact the main parties in the matter now under consideration. The effect of a stable trade on the value of land is wonderful, for it is not only powerful but permanent. Perhaps a perpetual lease of the whole colonies of the Governor General would not, to many landholders, compensate for the loss of the stake that is in dependence on the present question. To all, this stake is immense; for if the final arrangement of the business now under consideration shall be such, that nothing but sheer loss to those who stand in front of commercial enterprise can ensue, the annual revenue of landholders might in consequence sink so low; or if, on the other hand, matters shall be so adjusted, that every accessible advantage shall be so

cured to the nation, this revenue, as the result of national prosperity, may rise so high, that the difference itself may equal or even exceed all the rest. The interest, therefore, that the members of the legislature and the state (considered as a great political body, having a dependence for its revenues on commercial enterprise) have all severally in this business, is most important. The situation of the country is such, as to press these considerations strongly on them. Something must be done. The East India Company itself must admit this. Let it be recollected, however, that like every other class of merchants, when buoyed out of their station, this Company presses on towards its object, whatever sacrifices it may cost others. When the love of gain has steeled the mind against contrition, there is no assumption and no pretence too much not to be ventured on in the way of the attainment of advantage.

The India question is posed upon the public on grounds that are altogether unwarranted, and in a manner that is both unfair and unbecoming. The East India Company comprizes three distinct classes of functions. First, it holds certain rights of sovereignty over an extensive empire, secondly, it possesses in property invaluable territorial revenues, assets, ships, stores, and other effects, and lastly, it enjoys a monopoly of our trade to the East. In all these three characters, the operations of the Company are momentous and interesting, both in regard to its own and in regard to the public interest, but each of them rests on grounds peculiar to itself, and each in its own light ought accordingly to be regarded. It suits the Company, however, to draw up the whole under one view, to class all their operations under one train, and to attach the interest of the whole subjects under their charge to each particular part of this train. In this way, the British legislature is called upon to judge of matters the most complex under one general view, and to give its sanction to matters of the most opposite import,

The great end looked to in submitting India affairs to parliament is, the procuring of necessary supplies: the important objects to be provided for are unfolded, and the means at hand for meeting these are laid before it, but as the upshot of the whole is known to be this, that parliament must make up the deficiency, whatever it may be, and however it may arise, the very perplexity itself is an advantage in forwarding the object of the report; for under the shade of emergency, a sanction may be obtained for the greatest abuse. In this way, the British legislature is made—to give its approbation at once to the state of political connexions, and the establishment of manufactures that traverse the interests of Britain—to recognize the advantages resulting from the fatuity and debasement of the natives, and to docket the accounts given in of the profits of the tea trade—to analyze the necessary expenditure of the general government, and the petty disbursements peculiar to mercantile affairs. If any exceptionable clause catch attention, is it not, in such circumstances, easy to resolve it into new intricacies? Cannot a variety of expedients, neither difficult nor dangerous, be made to shroud whatever it is desirable to conceal?

EVERY one must see, that intricacy so obviously remediable is a loud call for some general improvement of the system, and that it is no less nugatory than absurd to consider the Directors as under any great degree of accountability, until this intricacy and perplexity be removed. For my part, if the point could be held as ascertained and fixed, that it was dangerous and improper to allow British subjects to visit the East except under the restrictions of the Company, I would at once propose to divide the Company into three separate bodies, in one of which the sovereignty would be vested, in another the territorial revenue and fixed effects, and in the third the monopoly of the trade to the East by such means, regular accounts could be kept, and a system of accountability maintained, and these, from the state of

our affairs, would be no inconsiderable attainments. The present confusion has no doubt grown out of events that have unexpectedly taken place. It has, however, continued long enough to exhibit its character and tendency, and it ought not to be continued; when the means of preventing it are obviously within our power.

That the rights of sovereignty, still exercised by the Company, may be laid hold of by the Crown, to whatever extent the legislature may appoint, without the consent or advice of the East India Company, I apprehend to be a point that few will attempt to controvert. To a certain extent the sovereignty has already been withdrawn from the Company, and if it is now necessary to lay hold of the remainder, I can see no ground in which the proprietors can start objections. Will they say that their policy and their prowess have produced this sovereignty? With much greater propriety, might the representatives of the illustrious Nelson, (the least of whose great victories throw all their achievements, both in point of lustre and of advantage into the shade,) claim the Empire of the ocean, or some modification of it in his right. Will they say that their means, as well as their policy and prowess have contributed to our aggrandizement in the East? The answer is, that their means were procured under the influence of the state, and are entirely circumscribed by the authority of its laws.

That the territorial revenues, ships, stores, effects, and other subjects, held as property by the East India Company, rest on very different grounds from the rights of sovereignty, forementioned, is very obvious. These they have acquired under the authority of the established laws of the nation, and for these they may claim respect, equal to that bestowed on every other description of property. The protection due to property accordingly is held to be extended around these, and the authority of the state and nation, as

pledged for their defence. These possessions, and these alone, are properly their own, and they are well warranted to use them in every lawful way, that their interest or caprice directs. It must however be remarked, that these possessions, like the possessions of every other British subject, are objects of taxation, and as amenable to the state in the way of public impost as any other, and that in the circumstances in which they stand, the legislature has a good right to lay its hand very heavy on these in this very way. Nay, it must be farther remarked, that a great part of the territorial possessions of the Company, are burdened in the most direct manner with the expence of sovereignty, and of consequence, must either in whole or in part, revert to the state, the instant that the state assumes the full burdens of sovereignty. Compensation in certain cases to a certain extent will no doubt appear to be due to the Company; but the adjustment of the nature and extent of this compensation ought not for a moment to impede government in this assumption. It is an invariable maxim in our law, that the claims of the state must always be preferable, and this maxim extends with peculiar force to the present instance.

THE monopoly of the East India Company, stands on a very different footing from both the rights above noticed. It arose out of the circumstances of the times, it is to be exercised during a definite period, and it can continue no longer, and be exercised no farther, than the limits assigned to it. It is in this point that the nation at large is most interested. We are thereby debarred from the exercise of a right, which every free nation but ourselves has claim to, and the party in whose favor this right is drawn up are allowed to lord it over us in the best half of the globe, in a way that we would not tolerate in any other class of the community, not even in the sovereign himself—in a way in fact, which, if but attempted on the part of any foreign nation, would be considered as a good ground of war. For

this monopoly the Company have not a single plea to adduce that can on the ground of right be listened to. It has been attempted to bewilder us with statements and arguments, in order to show that there is something like good policy in this as a general measure; but when the light of day has been passed through these, the whole fabric has appeared to be without substance.

Is it not ridiculous to hear the East India proprietors crowing over the taxes which they pay to government, while in truth, they are but the instruments of drawing these from the people, and when they discharge these no farther than their own circumstances render expedient. Do not the West India merchants pay much heavier imposts, and what is more to the purpose, do they not but too frequently pay these out of their own pockets, without ever requiring government to advance its millions for their advantage, or to indemnify them either directly or indirectly at the national expence? Is it not equally absurd to hear them talk of their investments in manufactured goods, when it is well known that these never are purchased but in the view of advantage, and only to that extent which their own interest requires. The merchants of Britain are neither destitute of capital, nor of the spirit of commercial enterprise, and it is altogether irrelevant to adduce extensive transactions in the way of trade, as an argument for restricting it. The magnitude of the East India Company's transactions, their sacrifices, and their exertions in the way of business are only deserving of public regard, in so far as they contribute to promote the general interests of the nation; and if there be any deficiency in the case, a few particular or solitary instances to the contrary are not to be listened to. This matter is to be determined by the character and tendency of their whole range of enterprise, and it may be illustrated in several particulars.

THE primary object of all trade and industry is a plentiful supply of productions and commodities, suitable to our circumstances. The exertions thereto made by the East India Company, in proportion to their advantages and opportunities in the field that has been allotted to them, have been extremely slender; witness the high price and scarcity of silk, cotton, and indigo. The imperfect state in which these commodities have been introduced into our markets, joined to this scarcity and high price, have operated as a premium on foreign manufactures, and as an impost on our own. We can scarcely cast our eyes abroad, without perceiving the mischief that thence results to our national influence and convenience, and the advantages that would result from supplies under a free system.

A SECOND object, scarcely less important than the foregoing is, that of animating and exercising our national faculties. It might be very possible for us to obtain all the supplies that we can personally appropriate and consume, while yet from the want of due excitation and support, our condition might nevertheless be very uncomfortable. We have faculties and talents that must be exercised and matured, and it is in the discipline induced for their exercise, that our individual improvement, and our social advancement consists. We might all of us have the most profuse supplies administered to all our wants, by means of systematic arrangement, on the purest principles of national oeconomy, and yet the great ends of trade and industry might not be answered. Our faculties lead us to seek out our appropriate gratifications, and to pursue these in our own way, and according to our own views of what is best for us, and we thank no one who will relieve us of the burden, by binding up or annihilating our propensities to exertion. The East India Company might institute immense establishments for manufacturing muslins at Glasgow, cloths at Leeds, and calicoes at Manchester, so as to absorb all the trade of these places in their

over India, and to destroy the stimulus for enterprise and
 for the growth of industry in that portion of the Empire which
 is to be civilized, and to be civilized it must be
 and talent might be exhibited. But when we reflect that the
 best talent, energy, and capital, in each nation, are
 those which are brought forward in the general competition and
 industry of the people, that augments their capacity for
 enterprise, that extends the sphere of human excellence, of
 talent and individual gratification, what could become of
 the landed interest, and of the middle interest, and of all who
 are dependent on energetic competition and exercised on
 local resources and advantages? Where would be the na-
 tional energies and resources themselves, the first fruits of
 our institutions, and the spring of our national character?
 Should not such a system, if followed out in every particu-
 lar, would convert the British nation into a community
 of parasites, as stupid, and as bigotted as the most debased
 tribes of the Hindoos? And such it must be noticed, is the
 present character and tendency of the East India system,
 and such its known operation and effects.

I have only point out a third aspect, under which this
 system may be regarded, and that is its influence on the
 relations of the state and of the community with for-
 eign nations. The East India Company professes merely
 to supply a certain part of our wants, and to recruit its
 own finances; but the nation and the government have to
 draw supplies from other nations for many important
 wants, which the East India Company cannot meet, and
 to discharge many duties which the aggrandisement of the
 Company cannot comprehend. These are matters of the
 very first magnitude to us as a nation, and we must not as
 we read our existence, overlook them. Our industry and
 resources must struggle against their claims. These are
 not traversed by the inevitable contingencies of war, and
 the very working of the system is such, that a test

tinued progressive train in the same course. To all this, as far as we are individually concerned, we do submit without murmuring, because it is our duty so to do, and because we perceive that any attempt to withdraw ourselves from the great cause, for which these sacrifices are made, would not only be unmanly, but impolitic. I would ask, however, whence are the means to be procured for enabling us to persevere in our duty, to uphold our friends, to frustrate our competitors, to combat our enemies? Our establishments for industry are paralyzed, our coffers are fast exhausting, and every avenue whence effectual relief can be obtained, is shut against us but one, and that one is in the hands of the monopolists. I am aware of the advantages that have recently risen into our hands, by the success of the Russians, and of others that may be expected to follow; but we must keep this in our eye, that these advantages are held on a most precarious footing; precarious perhaps, not so much from the late of war, as from the wayward measures of foreign cabinets, when fortune gives them any peculiar ascendancy. If we can shew our independence of the good will of these cabinets, their sense of friendship takes its due course; but the moment a proud nation like ours, lays open her distresses, her wants, and her expectations, a new set of feelings arise. If our intercourse with the East were laid open, on a footing that would insure competent relief, at once to our general, our commercial, and our financial difficulties, we might calculate with some degree of certainty on the continuance of this good will, on the part of our neighbours, and derive from intercourse with them, advantages that are not at present so much as thought of. Is it proper, is it wise, to permit ourselves to be divested of this advantage, or rather chain of advantages?

What do the favoured proprietors say to all this? They have recourse to the complexity of the subject. They talk of their martial achievements and territorial acquisitions

After the seas had been swept of the enemies fleets, and the best troops and generals of Britain, placed under their banners, had, through the merciful protection of heaven, obtained possession of extensive domains, these, it seems the results of our blood and treasure, are to be held as props to their abject domination. They next point to their inflated wealth, their navies crowned with pomp, (the result of high prices for their commodities, unfeelingly extracted from our nation by dint of their monopoly,) and contrasting these with the deep depression and calamity, under which our resources are involved, (and they do this with the very breath, that they come forward to demand the supplies necessary to avert their own destruction,) they then ask us where we have means to support such a trade as this ! Nor is this all ; when the lease of their monopoly is about to expire, and when they are about to submit it to our legislature, whether it shall be continued or not, they scruple not to exhibit their contempt of our national religion, character, and civil constitution. Surely they do not consider that it is, at least for this time, their business to sooth our jealousies ; they cannot suppose our august legislature is to be dragooned into their measures !

THE subject is certainly too serious to be treated of in the way of banter ; and yet as the East India proprietors, (who taken in the aggregate must have feelings as just and as independent as any of their countrymen,) have not heretofore opened their eyes to the strangeness of their situation, it is but fair to place their pretensions in the strongest and fullest light. The fact is, they are loth, exceedingly loth, to part with the insignia of sovereignty, and they see in their predominancy, charms that outweigh their best interests. Let them, however, call to mind, the evils and misfortunes into which their fatuous pursuit of advantage has led the nation, and by these, measure their claims to supremacy. When the Scotch nation had exhausted itself in the view of planting a colony at Darien, that would have given to

Great Britain, the command of the Eastern and Western Hemispheres, it was the intrigues of the Company that blasted their design—it was that Company too that grappled with our now gigantic cotton manufactures, when but in the cradle ; and it was only prevented by the superior prowess of machinery, from giving them at that time their death-blow. Our assessed taxes were doubled to secure the interests of its monopoly of tea—and it was enforcing for its behoof this commodity on America, that that vast empire was lost. The truth is, wherever the Company appears as a sovereign, there a callousness to all that is excellent, and a blind rage for advantage, is most conspicuous.

BUT this is not all ; the Company has long intervened its powers and its terrors against the propagation of our holy faith, and it shields with its influence, superstitions, the most ghastly, and the most horrid ; its policy stands the rampart of ignorance and debasement, and it is not ashamed to owe part of its revenues and authority to a connection with rites and ceremonies, more shameful than any that have existed since the power of Christianity was felt in this globe. It becomes us not, however, to shake ourselves loose from this guilt. It is but of yesterday, that we gave our veto to the trade in human flesh. We ourselves and our government are perhaps even here the most guilty ; for our influence has at all times been competent to the prevention of such crimes. We might have done much for the propagation of the truth that we have not done ; and it is only through the mercy and goodness of God, that severe as our restrictions have been, they have not prevented the Germans, Danes, Americans, and some of the best disposed amongst ourselves, from diffusing the light and power of our holy faith amidst such darkness.

I CONSIDER it necessary to express my sentiments thus clearly and fully, because experience has at length proved

that though the India Directors be now, in a manner, stripped of their sovereign authority, yet they can exercise an influence over the whole train of India transactions, that can impress in the fullest manner, the character of their system, on objects the highest and most important, and because it is now evident, that the evil cannot be remedied, until the monopoly itself be brought to an end. The power of the state, and the influence of the nation, have in part moderated that fatuous love of gain, which at a former period was productive of frightful crimes and calamities. The East India proprietors and directors form a most respectable and highly estimable part of our community, (some of these do honor not only to our name and nation, but to the age in which we live, and are as illustrious in a moral and religious point of character, as others of our countrymen are in a martial and political,) yet even these, under the influence of a system, which reduces every consideration, the highest and the purest, as well as the most ordinary, into its value in pounds sterling, are made instrumental in pushing forward a train of measures which tend directly to level our attainments with their pecuniary value. The evil, as things now stand, cannot but be incurable, for when the criterion of all that is excellent, is the impulse of the annual dividends, and the evil that is of all others the most dreaded, a defalcation in the results of mercantile enterprise, where can the finer and the nobler sympathies and endowments of our nature, those in which the protection of the helpless, and the advancement of the excellent disclose themselves? How can these reach their object, or exercise themselves towards its attainment?

This state of things is more to be lamented, because in their own proper department, the India Company and all its agents exhibit a sense of duty, and a correspondent deportment, that indicates the strongest sense of propriety. Nowhere, I believe, have the particular objects of every de-

partment of office been followed up with more fidelity, care, and attention, than in the affairs of the East India Company; the line of classification has no doubt generally run in the order, which a regard to pecuniary import has drawn for it, but a degree of fidelity, zeal and discretion, in the management of affairs committed in trust, has resulted from this method, that does the highest honour to the character of the Company. This very property, however, certainly contributes to disqualify them for those enlarged apprehensions of things that are necessary on the part of those who have stupendous objects under their control. It contracts the views and diminishes the powers of the mind; it envelopes the great leading objects in mists and obscurity, and raises the most minute affairs out of their place. So long, therefore, as this great political body is beset with such vague impulses, in the discharge of its duty, so long will it, though possessed of vast resources and energies, and endowed with faculties and propensities that are accustomed to meet in the most direct manner their proper object, exhibit nothing but a continued train of base and sordid measures, altogether, unbecoming its situation. These measures, may be influenced by various impulses and be moderated in their results as well as in their appearances; still, however, they will partake of the common character of the system, and tend rather to the confirmation of what is wrong, than to its amendment.

THE evil lies in the system, but the system itself let it be noticed, arises out of circumstances that are under our control. The East India Company is an active, a highly efficient, and most estimable branch of our civil polity, and it has functions to discharge of much higher import, than those resulting from its monopoly. It is possessed of extensive domains, invaluable ships, stores and effects; it is possessed also of the confidential regard of the commercial part of the community. From its means and resources it is entitled to the highest mercantile confidence; for its property is im-

mense, through the value of this property will never be known, until it is unfolded under a proper system. The means and resources of this great Company require nurturc and protection, and this nurture and protection are provided the moment the monopoly is at an end. The spirit of enterprise and industry that is to attracted to the East must bring this provision to the Company's resources, from whence supplies are to be drawn, and the stimulus to be obtained, whereby the real value of all its real effects is to be exhibited. This is in truth the Company's situation ; its interest, and its duty are linked together. The main object of solicitude and attention to the East India Company ought to be to draw forth and uphold the superinduced industry and enterprise, and to bear these directly to those objects ; and its ultimate end, to advance the value, and augment the price of those investitures, whereby its own wealth is constituted. In short, the East India Company must have the improvement of its territorial revenue chiefly or rather solely in view. For the sake of this object, it must strip itself of every other avocation, and without at all involving itself in the transactions of trade, it must be its business to draw towards it the floating means of the country ; and this cannot be done more effectually, and more expeditiously, than by devoting its best offices, indiscriminately to the service of commercial adventurers, and without excluding itself as a body, by the most positive obligations from all concern whatever with the business of import or export. The whole circumstances of the trade point directly to this, as an indispensable step in the way of obtaining the great and leading objects of the new arrangement. For if the Company continue to dabble in affairs that admit of rivalry and competition, it will effectually blight the fair advantages of the ordinary trader. It is only by devolving on others all the various hazards of adventure, that the advancement of territorial possession, the grand ulterior design to be prosecuted, can be promoted ; it is only by resolving as expeditiously as prudence will admit of it, every description of these that imply detail and complicated

management into subjects of revenue, that the interests, that must by this means become established, can be held to have reached their ultimate resolution.

BESIDES the various objects of regard that are connected with its territorial possessions, and its ships and naval provisions, there arises in favor of the East India Company, from the situation of all parties, a special function, which it alone can execute, and which it is imperiously called upon to assume. It demands the utmost attention of this august body at this very moment; for it regards *the financial concerns of this whole trade, and of all that is embarked in it.* This is a vast object, and it has always created much difficulty. It occurs to me that government might easily give the East India Company a compensation this way, that would forever remove these difficulties. Let the East India Directors be vested with power to issue in India, in a regular and suitable manner, by means of promissory notes, the whole amount of the compensation, at which their whole claims may be valued; let these notes, after being twelve months current in India, be resolvable into drafts at par on the Court of Directors at home; and in order to enable these Directors to meet these drafts at maturity, let them be vested with power to issue promissory notes to be current in this kingdom for a couple of years. Let our own government be held to be responsible for this whole range of transactions, and for this purpose affix a proper docquet on each note; and let the funds thus created and circulated be declared by authority to be of equal value and import with those of the Bank of England. The nation has betaken itself to a paper currency, and though the Bank of England should be obliged to receive and pass these notes indiscriminately with its own, the security held by the nation for this currency, would not be diminished, but greatly increased by the arrangement. No ultimate evil could take place, for the amount, the object, the term of currency, are definitely fixed and limited.

This scheme might perhaps move long on its own basis, but if it did not, the extent of the evil is seen ; for government could interpose itself at any time, and take up the impledgements. This is a brief idea of the employment that I would devolve on the Company. Circumstances would press themselves on its attention, to fill up the whole plan.

THE East India Directors would thereby pour financial relief into their Indian territories, and enable and dispose the occupant of these not only to improve their possessions, but to purge off, in the way of compensation, the various incumbrances under which their possessions may be laid ; an alternative we may rest assured, that they would betake themselves to as soon as the value of free unincumbered property and industry should, in the way of unrestricted commerce and industry, be fully disclosed to them. By this means too, adventurers to India would obtain a variety of facilities in realizing their effects, that would be otherwise unattainable ; and the general industry and improvement of the whole community would go on, in the most direct and efficient course. In Britain, the support and excitation thereby provided for our commercial transactions, and for rearing and supporting establishments and manufactories suited to the India trade, would go on with every advantage, and the East India Company, in the increased value of their foreign possessions, would perceive resources whence ample returns for all the sacrifices, and for all the solicitude, that on their part, are now required, would be drawn.

It is by such means as these, and by such alone, that our Indian Empire is to rise to its proper place in our system. Thereby its invaluable resources will be developed, and the faculties and energies of its population extricated from the debasing superstition under which they are at present bent. Thereby, also, the country at large will be bound to us as with a chain of adamant, and its whole strength and sub-

stance resolve itself easily into general good. These are most important considerations, and they are not to be rejected because they are the result of a theory that has been misapplied. In France, it was paper money (there the guise of treachery) that drew out the country in the service of the turbulent; it was the same instrument that consolidated the British settlement at the revolution. In India, the power thus introduced must be doubly efficient, for it will exercise the population under our influence for their own advantage, and thus discover to them a source of blessings arising from subjection to our influence of the most estimable kind; it will raise them above the influence of their feeble phantasies—it will fit them for those great duties, those high subjects of contemplation and regard that are so excitative of ennobling sentiments, which are common to all the objects of the general empire, and it will make them not only faithful but useful and valuable members of this great community.

On the whole therefore, it is manifest, that though as sovereigns the East India proprietors have no claims on our regard, and as monopolists governed by a fatuous love of gain are deserving of the severest reprehensions, yet they are well entitled to maintain a high, honourable and authoritative place in our system. Their conduct, as instruments for carrying forward any great and laudable design, has seldom been otherwise than meritorious in this view. The fault is in placing them in a situation that does not become them, and in expecting from them blessings which they have not faculties to bestow. This fault can only be remedied by giving them their proper place in our system, and by maintaining and preserving them in this place. Let us next advert to the whole consequences of this arrangement.

The advantages, resulting from the "civilisation of Hindostan and a free unrestricted trade to China, appear in their

full importance, when we view them as connected with unrestricted intercourse with all the other nations of the East. Commerce, with the shores of Africa and Arabia, the empires of Persia, Siam, Agra, and Japan, could be of little importance, if we had not the means and assistance to be procured from these advantages. The Hindoos in this way may become our legs and arms in carrying on this trade, and they will feel their importance and their advantage in being thus employed. They will, under our shade and protection, bring home and realize riches, of which the best fruits will again arise into our hands. They will highly prize their improvements and attainments under our influence, and become proud of opportunities of displaying and diffusing them; they will thus gradually rise out of their prostrate condition, and bless the hand that has helped to upraise them. They will become the means of disseminating the knowledge and the advantages that they have obtained amongst the wide extended realms of Asia and Africa, and under British sway become the centre and spring of the regeneration of these realms. The advantages, political and commercial, that Great Britain will thus acquire, must be proportionate. Her empire on the seas will become confirmed. Apart from the rest of the world, she will, through the medium of her settlements in Canada, the Cape and Hindostan, maintain her influence over the whole—not a blasting, crushing, overwhelming influence, but one that enters benignly into the character, and invigorates while it supports the energies of every thing great and good in every nation.

These views are grand and glorious, but they are neither unseemly for the occasion, nor in the least illusive; they have been powerful springs of action with the greatest nations and with the greatest heroes—but to none of them, as to us, have the means for realising them been so extensive and so appropriate. By having the command of the ocean,

we have direct access to every country; by having under our power not only territorial riches and strength of the most extraordinary kind, but processes and establishments and means for increasing these and their value and importance immeasurably, while we can make our access sure, we render our intercourse most desirable. Nor is this all: our religious institutions and civil advantages are prepared to give full effect to the civilizing processes that may be induced. Commercial intercourse itself is a most powerful stimulant and supporter of such a process, it excites industry, it administers to its wants, it relieves it of its burdens, it rewards its exertions, and it crowns it with riches and honour. Industry, informed and supported by science and political power, is the precursor and the parent of improvement of mind as well as of outward estate; it enables and it obliges us all to bestir ourselves in the way of duty, to get quit of foul prejudices, to keep under our violent propensities, and to make real progress in every valuable and substantial acquirement; it puts it into our power to ameliorate the condition of others, not only without at all impairing, but in the direct way of ameliorating our own. It produces in fact all that is excellent, and it places it, when obtained, in the place that is most seemly; it prepares man for the services of religion, and when properly disciplined under its mild and beneficent principles, industry itself becomes an act of devotion, a sacrifice of time and of labour to the highest objects of human solicitude, grateful to Heaven, and supremely beneficent to our fellow-creatures.

It appears to me that there is something in our national character and condition that fits us for this exalted station. I think too, that there is a kind of destination of this character and condition to these very services. It was the privilege of Britain to receive the first and the purest beams of the reformed religion, and under a peculiar system of discipline to have her institutions for these, and for administer-

ing the functions of civil government, purified and endowed with the most ameliorating functions. Britain became obnoxious to the enemies of religion and of liberty, on account of the appropriate support that she administered to these. The most tremendous naval armament that ever set to sea was prepared for her destruction, but the hand of God, seen and acknowledged by all parties, saved her from even tasting of this destruction. A similar miracle, the disclosure of the plot, snatched her whole constituted authorities from a death still more awful. Britain saw the race of sovereigns, that was lukewarm or untrue to her proper cause, ingloriously dethroned. The defalcation of this race began in abandoning their presumptuous son-in-law, the zealous ally of their faith, to ruin; and their punishment was completed when the descendents of that high-minded, ill-fated prince, were peacefully seated in their vacated throne. The industry and the sobriety of Britons were for above a century disciplined by intercourse with their expatriated brethren abroad. When this empire had withdrawn its allegiance from the common sovereign, a new one sprung up in the East, more fitted to receive her good offices and to diffuse her high advantages. When we come closer to our situation, and contemplate the various interferences of providence at the commencement and during the continuance of the French revolution, the character, the importance and the obligancy of our great national duties, that of protecting and diffusing the truth, appear most conspicuous. When Ireland was in a state of rebellion, when the navy had mutinied, was not our preservation evidently the work of that Hand that has prescribed to us this duty? When Austria had sunk at Ulm, how seasonably did Nelson's last victory take place! When the whole shores of Iberia and its immense resources had fallen under Bonaparte's sway, and thus in a manner had rendered our naval predominancy nugatory, how seasonably did her revulsion wrest this advantage from under his hand! When glutted with conquest and good

fortune, this man supposed he had nothing to do but to find some appropriate employment for himself, until we, by working out our strength, had prepared ourselves for becoming his easy prey in Spain—how wonderfully was he infatuated to betake himself and all his means to an expedition that could not but end in his overthrow ! In all these events we mark the hand of God preserving our nation, its means of intercourse, its faculties of ameliorating the circumstances and character of our race. We perceive that nothing has been too great for us to achieve, in the way of following out this destination ; that no state of affairs has been too desperate to make us lose sight of it ; and that no disaster that could mar this grand object has ever been allowed to overwhelm us.

THIS is a service to which we do not come unprepared, and in advancing towards it do not presume to trespass on the rules of discretion. The elements of civil as well as of natural power are, to a certain extent, subjects of calculation and control. The successive means that broke the bands of superstition—the invention of printing, the dissemination of the properties of the magnetic needle, and other qualities of natural bodies, the discovery of America, and the passage round the Cape, are known and perceived by all of us to be direct steps in the way of blasting and destroying these disgraceful bands. The concentration of all previous discoveries in the arts of navigation, of warfare, and of improvement in industry and in social life—and the advancement of the British to a high command over a system, in which all these are prepared and laid to hand as appropriate and immediate instruments, have qualified the British government for rescuing the Eastern world from the deplorable delusions of French prophanity and oppression. At length various discoveries and various acquisitions have put it in the power of Britain to push this advantage farther, to raise as it were a phalanx, comprizing the nations at large drawn up in support and de-

fence of the cause that is her own. Nor is this all: Britain is imperiously called upon to exercise this power. The time was, when maintaining the balance of Europe consisted in trimming the possessions of a few states on the Rhine, and on the North of Italy. By and bye, this system of balancing embraced all Europe. Europe now bleeds under an usurper, and it is hard to say what may be her ultimate fate. It will contribute to her recovery, if we can plant and mature the principles of improvement in the other parts of the world. To plant these we are in a manner necessitated, from our dependence on commercial excitation and support. Improvements in education, in the modes of disseminating useful and important knowledge, and a high spirit in the body of the nation, constitute a new set of means and new principles of action, springing forward and urging us to do our duty in this instance, and thereto offering their assistance. In the mean time, commercial influence, the strongest influence that can be exercised on men acting independently in a progressive state of social advancement—financial connexions, the most powerful ligament of social relations, and the most effectual restraint on every thing violent and irregular in civil polity that we know of, and a high sense of character to give to these their full effect, together with a range and opportunities commensurate with our highest wishes and expectations—are all at present within our power. We are in a manner not only introduced into, but pushed along the highest line of national duty. Shall we take half measures? It was not by half measures that Russia saved herself, and it is not by half measures that an object every way so great and glorious is to be obtained.

LET it be supposed, that while the exploits which now irradiate with so much lustre and potency the Russian name, was a doing or projecting (it is the greatest that was ever achieved in any age by any nation, whether the depth of contrivance, the scale on which it was executed, the quali-

ties of head and of heart which it elicited, the multitude the grandeur and the value of the objects which it embraced, the end to which it tended, or the consequences that have followed—be considered), let it be supposed, that at this very crisis, some individuals or some body of individuals had possessed influence sufficient to paralyze the arm of the state with their fears and their doubts and their jealousies respecting the bearings of this event on their own peculiar interests, and on their special class of advantages; what would have been the result? Where would have been the independence of Europe? Its high-minded citizens might have been bound hopelessly under the chains of its desolator, and their only prospect of relief have consisted in projecting a renewed series of warfare and turmoil.

THE case now before the British Legislature, may not seem to run quite parallel with that which is above stated, nor the crisis and urgency appear so alarming and so great. Let us, however, take into account our situation and our advantages, and the correspondence of the duties and services that are before us with these, and say, whether or not, views equally exalted and extensive, principles equally pure and magnanimous, and conduct equally heroic and determined, be not as imperiously demanded on our part at present, as they were at that time in Russia. The fate of millions as numerous, and points of that fate as important hang upon our decision. The glory and the advantage that may follow, are noways less momentous, and though our national existence be not so nearly affected, advantages to us the greatest, are as completely at stake. If through fatality of councils, our Indian Empire should become a real burden to us, the illusion of our greatness will soon disappear. What the envy and jealousy of neighbours might, in such circumstances, attempt to do against the sovereigns of the ocean, thus crestfallen and denuded, their conduct, when America deserted our standards, enables us too plainly conjecture. While our re-

sources are entire, and our spirits unbroken, we can bear up under privations and exertions that appear to be extreme. What would follow if things were reversed, no human being can foretell. If in Heaven we have full confidence, in doing our duty and exercising ourselves on our advantages, we will fear nothing so much as to forfeit its favour, or to incur its displeasure. Happily, no sacrifices that need appal us, nor exertions from which we must shrink, are required. It is chiefly with our own prejudices and misconceptions that we struggle, and in this we have advantages that ought to remove every alarm. It is the same principles on which our security has been founded, and the same maxims on which our attainments have been built up, that we are called upon to follow out and obey—enlarged indeed, and expanded with their appropriate objects, but every way as correspondent to our circumstances as before.



Chapman, Printer, Glasgow.

EAST-INDIA QUESTION.

FOUR LETTERS

RESPECTING

THE CLAIMS

OF THE

EAST-INDIA COMPANY

FOR

A Renewal

OF THEIR

EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES.

“ Matter of Fact breaks out and blazes with too great an Evidence to be denied.”

LONDON :

Printed for J. BLACK, York Street, Covent-Garden.

1813.

PREFACE.

The following Letters, with the exception of the last, have been submitted to the Public, through the medium of a periodical Journal;—such a mode of communication, however, being too limited to afford that general information, which is so desirable for a due appreciation of the East-India Company's claims, the author has been induced to offer them in their present shape. He is fully sensible of his want of ability to do the subject ample justice; he however regrets this circumstance the less, because the Facts, which these Letters contain, are so strong in themselves, that they cannot fail to carry conviction with them to the mind of every impartial reader.



LETTERS.

LETTER I.

26th January, 1813.

THE following remarks of a foreign author, M. Rubichon, "*On England*," as to the very important services which the East India Company, under its present form of administration, has rendered to the nation, appear so apposite to the question now pending between that honorable body and His Majesty's Ministers, that I cannot, in justice to my country, refrain from laying them before the public at large.

It will be proper to premise, that the author is treating of the opposite system pursued with regard to the government of

our East and West Indian possessions respectively, shewing the impolicy of the latter, and the evils which have resulted therefrom to the mother country : and, on the other hand, briefly depicting the benefits and advantages which she has derived from the different policy adopted with regard to our East India possessions.

“ Here, in London, we could observe,
 “ for these twenty years past, that, as soon
 “ as England was in hostility with Italy,
 “ and that she could not draw any more
 “ from her the SILK necessary to her ma-
 “ nufactures, the Company caused mulber-
 “ ry trees to be planted in the East Indies,
 “ and furnished annually SILK to England
 “ by thousands of bales ;—that, as soon as
 “ England was in hostility with Spain, and
 “ that she could not draw any more from her
 “ the INDIGO necessary to her manufactures,
 “ the Company caused that plant to be

“ cultivated in the East Indies, and fur-
 “ nished annually INDIGO to England by
 “ thousands of chests ;—that, as soon as
 “ England was in hostility with France,
 “ and that she could not draw from her
 “ the CORN necessary to her consumption,
 “ as in 1801, that she was exposed to a
 “ famine, the Company imported all her
 “ ships loaded with the RICE of the East
 “ Indies ;—that, as soon as England was in
 “ hostility with Russia, and that she could
 “ not draw any more from her the HEMP
 “ necessary to her Navy, the Company
 “ caused that plant to be cultivated in the
 “ East Indies, and furnished the requisite
 “ supply. England, threatened with the
 “ hostility of the Americans, will not be
 “ sufficiently supplied with COTTON WOOL ;
 “ the Company will furnish what is neces-
 “ sary to her manufactures. Finally,
 “ England, in hostility with herself, des-

“ **troys her own dominions, her Colonies ;**
 “ **the Company will furnish the SUGAR and**
 “ **the COFFEE necessary to Europe. There**
 “ **has been for these twenty years past,**
 “ **and there will be for the future, neither**
 “ **crimes, folly, or misfortunes in Europe,**
 “ **of which the Company has not been,**
 “ **and will not be, the redresser ; for one**
 “ **may suppose that the Company does not**
 “ **redress gratuitously ; we may judge of**
 “ **it by the Docks which she has excavated ;**
 “ **by the number and the greatness of the**
 “ **buildings which she has erected ; by the**
 “ **considerable quantity of English goods**
 “ **which she has exported ; by the punctual-**
 “ **ity with which her manufacturers, car-**
 “ **riers, packers, ship-owners, have been**
 “ **paid ; we may judge of it by the means**
 “ **she has to bring into the market the**
 “ **commodities which she imports, *only in***
 “ ***a quantity relative to the demand ; by***

“ the means she has to maintain a *fair*
 “ *price*, and thus to secure, as a support,
 “ the capital of the speculators, who know
 “ that they will be supported by her ; final-
 “ ly, we may judge of it by the exactness
 “ and the liberality with which the divi-
 “ dends are paid to her stock-holders.”

This is not an overcharged representa-
 tion ; on the contrary, many benefits, which
 the East India Company have rendered to
 the nation at large, are omitted in M. Ru-
 bichon’s statement ; but as these are too
 long to be detailed in the present address, I
 propose to make them the subject of another
 letter.

VERAX.

LETTER II.

4th February, 1813.

HAVING, at the conclusion of my last letter, signified my intention of stating the additional benefits which the East-India Company have rendered to the nation beyond those contained in the remarks of “ M. Rubichon,” I trust, the public will not be less ready than that enlightened foreigner, duly to appreciate the advantages which the nation has derived from the *present form* of administering the Government of India, not any of which advantages could have arisen, and consequently the benefits derived therefrom to this country, must have been lost, had the open trade to India, as now contended for, at that time existed ; and should such an improvident measure be hereafter adopted, no such future advantages can be obtained.

Manifold, however, as those benefits are, which M. Rubichon has stated, still, though it is the *truth*, it is *not* the *whole* truth. M. Rubichon has omitted, what, from his ingenuous frankness, I conclude he was not aware of, viz. the *arcession* rendered by the Company, in a time of need, to the Navy of England, who, at one period, transferred to Government no fewer than ten large ships, of from 1200 to 1400 tons each, which were speedily converted into sixty-fours, and, under the command of the gallant Commodore Trollope, added to the numerous trophies of the British Navy; which great event, but for this timely aid, could not have happened. And here let me ask, *could* this aid have been granted had an *open trade* then existed? The reply to this question must be self-evident. And are such great, important, certain, and vital interests of the country at large,

to be sacrificed for the *visionary hopes* of the individual gain of *deluded speculators*? I trust to the good sense of the thinking and *informed* part of the community, and to the enlightened wisdom of Parliament, that such egregious error will be avoided.—I may be here permitted to say a few words upon the term “*Monopoly*,” as nothing can be more falsely and absurdly applied than this term is to the East-India Company—for a monopoly not only implies an exclusive right to *buy*, but to *sell* also, and upon the monopolist’s *own terms*. Now those persons at all acquainted with the nature of the Company’s commercial dealings, know that the Company *do not* possess the *power* to do either the one or the other; that is, to buy or sell upon their *own terms*: and that they are obliged, *by law*, to put up to public sale at *stated periods*, the articles imported, not at rates fixed by

themselves, but at rates named by the buyers, who bid against each other. A monopolist, strictly speaking, will *only sell* when he can get the *price* for his commodity which he *himself has fixed*, and of which, from his being the *exclusive possessor, unfettered by any legal restrictions*, he will not dispose, till the state of the market, from the supply being *withheld*, insures to him the inordinate profits he anticipates. This is *not* the case with the East-India Company, who do not possess the power, and therefore, even if so disposed, *are restrained by law from becoming monopolists*; besides, being obliged by Act of Parliament, always to keep a supply of Tea in hand of upwards of 6,000,000 of lbs, equal to at least three months consumption. As a proof of their disposition to discourage monopoly I will relate a fact:—At the time when Captain Dance (now Sir Nathaniel)

was commodore of a China fleet, anxiously expected with a large supply of tea, and which was then much wanted, the apprehension of the capture of that fleet by a French squadron, commanded by Admiral Linois, had the effect of inducing high bidding, and consequent increase of price, at the periodical sales of teas at the India House; but the Directors, with a magnanimity worthy so respectable a body, not wishing to take an undue advantage of the public distress (which in all probability would have ensued from the capture of the fleet abovementioned), or allowing others to do so, and instead of yielding to the tempting lure, which would have poured thousands of pounds, beyond what was calculated, into the Company's treasury, actually *repressed* this spirit of speculation, and with a view of moderating the bidding to its usual level, declared, that they would instantly advertise an additional

sale of 500,000 lbs. of Tea.- This had the desired effect of keeping down the price to its usual standard! — What would open traders have done under similar circumstances? The usual practice of *individual monopolists* will best answer the question. Every poor subject of this realm, whose principal beverage is Tea, would have felt, in the additional drain on his slender finances, the consequences of such a state of things.

As a proof this, I beg leave to select one of many instances of **INDIVIDUAL MONOPOLY**.

A few years ago, some persons engaged in an extensive speculation in the article of Allum; they not only bought up the whole of what they could obtain in England, but they possessed such influence, even over the continental markets, as soon to become the sole proprietors of that article. The exor-

bitant price they, in consequence, demanded for it, occasioned the discovery of a *substitute*, by which the value of the *real* article became so reduced, that the monopolists were entirely ruined ! Such would in all probability be the case in many articles of Indian produce, were the trade thrown open. Thus it is, from the boundless desires of *individual speculators*, that the evils of unrestrained monopoly are to be dreaded ; whilst, on the contrary, the wholesome restraints under which the Company's trade is placed, are a security for the regular and due supply of the public demand, at a moderate and fair price ! But, to return to the Tea ; here let me ask, what would have been the result, had that necessary article, as above mentioned, been importing in *out-port* ships of 400 tons, instead of the large and efficient ships of the East-India Company ? not one, in all probability, would

ever have reached any of the ports of the United Kingdom. Admiral Linois will best answer that ; and he, who is now a crippled prisoner in England, would have been enjoying in his native land, the profit of a capture as valuable as, hitherto, rare to our enemies ; while the Company and the country, instead of having to congratulate each other in the preservation, to the country, of ships and property to the value of more than £1,000,000 sterling, would have had to lament so vast a sacrifice, from the adoption of a most impolitic, unwise, and ruinous system, in the room of one tried by the test of experience—one “ that has been weighed in the balance, and *not* found wanting ”—which has contributed largely and advantageously to the *naval strength of the British Empire* ; a cause, in itself, sufficient to entitle the Company (under whom it has so risen) to

the gratitude of the country. But when coupled with other causes, so numerous and powerful as have been, and still may be urged, it forms together such a mass of *conclusive evidence*, in favour of the Company possessing their exclusive privileges of trade (as much to the advantage of the country generally, as to the benefit of the Company) that I cannot for a moment suppose Government will commit such an act of *suicide* as to destroy that, which has produced such beneficial results to the empire; and of which it must ever after be deprived, if the ruinous measure of an open trade to and from India be adopted.

VERAX.

LETTER III.

18th February, 1813.

A WELL informed and judicious writer on India Affairs has truly said, that “ the consequence of general indifference upon the subject, has been general ignorance.” The existence of this lamentable fact is perhaps to be traced to the want of general information, as to the affairs of the East-India Company ; and upon no part of those affairs does information appear to be more wanted, than upon the subject of the Company’s Debt.

I propose therefore to consider the causes from whence such Debt has arisen, and the reasons why the means intended for its liquidation, have not hitherto attained the end proposed.

The cause of the pressure upon the Company's home treasury arises from the transfer of a great portion of the Indian Debt to Europe, which Debt was incurred for *political*, and not for commercial purposes, and which it was not within the power of the Company to control. The public are perhaps not aware that, by the Act of the Legislature passed in 1793, all orders of the Directors to the Company's Governments in India undergo the revision and approbation of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, before they can be transmitted to those Governments. This Board is composed principally of the highest Members of the Administration for the time being, and is appointed by the Crown; the Company cannot therefore be answerable for the consequences resulting from the orders of this controlling Board; so that, in equity, the Debt which has been

contracted in India, is not chargeable to the Company.

In order to meet the demands upon the Company's treasury here, arising from the transfer of the Indian debt to this country, supplies of bullion were provided by the Company's government abroad for transmission to England, they have been however prevented in many instances from carrying these intentions into effect, on account of the sums which had been so provided having been applied to His Majesty's service in that quarter.

I have an instance of this now before me, in a letter which I received from a friend of mine in Bengal, by His Majesty's ship *Modeste*, lately arrived in England, who asserts it as a matter of public notoriety in India, that last season, when a very considerable supply of bullion was actually packed up for transmission to England, it

was suddenly ordered to the Mauritius to supply the urgent want of the King's Government at that island. Hence the disappointment the Company then experienced, and which compelled them last year to apply to Parliament for a larger sum than otherwise they would have required. It is fit, also, that the public should know, that the pecuniary assistance occasionally granted by Parliament to the Company, and generally considered as loans, are, in fact, advances only on account of monies absolutely due by the public to the Company; and I have good reason to believe, that if a balance of account were now struck between the Public and the Company, it would be found very highly in favour of the latter.* Thus the Company stand, in

* This belief is fully confirmed by the Company's Petition to Parliament, made public since the above letter

reality, in a very different point of view to that in which their opponents (most of them ignorantly, I imagine) would wish to place them ; and that, instead of reproach, at having incurred so large a debt, they are, on account of the supplies so seasonably afforded to the Public, and at so great a sacrifice of their own interest, entitled to its gratitude and support.

VERAX.

letter was first written ; by which it appears, that the Public are indebted to the Company a balance on account of upwards of £2,200,000 !

LETTER IV.

22d February, 1813.

THE ostensible ground for refusing the claim of the Company to a continuation of the exclusive privileges, which they have so long possessed, is, that the *country at large* should participate in the Indian trade ; how far the real fact agrees with this assertion, it is highly important to enquire.

It appears, that instead of this great sacrifice of the Company being made to the nation at large, a very few of the outports, only, are to enjoy this privilege ; and for these, and these only, are such great important *national* interests to be hazarded ! How far His Majesty's Ministers will be able to reconcile the unsuccessful petitioners to this downfall of their hopes, and disappointment of their expectations, I know

not;—it is indeed “ robbing Peter,” not, however, “ to pay Paul,” but to *cheat* him ! For if the Company’s just claims are thus to be denied, whilst only three or four out-ports are to have, what are termed, the advantages of an open trade ; how the public *at large* are to be benefited I am at a loss to conjecture. But leaving this extraordinary paradox, whose solution is (to me) past finding out, and supposing, for an instant, that the intended measure is actually to be carried into effect, I beg to ask, will the Ministers make it a *sine qua non*, that the exports of the favoured outport adventures shall, in a certain proportion, consist of *British Woollen Manufactures and of Tin* ? which articles the Company now export, annually, to a great amount, and at a loss ! and which is consequently a drawback, to the extent of such loss, upon the profitable articles of the Company’s export ;—but the

Company are content thus to lessen the aggregate of their profits, in order that these important branches of our manufacture and produce may be benefitted ! But will these *patriotic* merchants, of *themselves*, submit to carry on such a losing trade ? That is not likely. Unless, then, conditions be imposed, to compel them so to do, what will become of the interests of these two great branches of our staple manufactures ? for upon no pretence of justice could the Company be compelled to export these articles, if the outport adventurers were exempt from such obligation. The cloathing counties, which now derive a great part of their support from the Company's exports, would become sufferers to a most serious extent, were the vend for their manufactures thus to be stopped !

With regard to the article of Tin, the benefit which the county of Cornwall has

derived from the Company's export of that article, may be gathered from the printed Papers, No. 2, published at the East-India House. A short extract from the letter of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to Lord Melville, under date the 21st March 1812, page 91, may here suffice, although the whole letter is most worthy the attentive perusal of every person desirous of information on this important subject.

The extract is as follows.

“ That in consequence of the arrange-
 “ ment with the Company in 1789, where-
 “ by the surplus quantity of Cornish Tin
 “ has been taken out of the London market,
 “ the price of that Tin has risen to £100,
 “ £120, £150 and even £171 per ton,
 “ whereby the miners have been enabled to
 “ work their deepest mines, and to meet the
 “ pressure of the times, in as much, that

“ the agency of the Company, in this particular, has been termed the political salvation of the county.”

It may be well to apprise the public—that in the immediate neighbourhood of the Company’s own possessions in India, Tin can be obtained in abundance, and at rates far below that which the Cornish miners can afford to supply it—but with all these advantages, so closely within their reach, have the Company foregone their own *profit*, in order to benefit the inhabitants of their native soil ; and it is worthy of the most serious consideration, whether they shall be enabled to continue their powerful support to the numerous bodies employed in this branch of their exports, or whether they shall be compelled to revert to other sources, from which all the great benefit, now confined to this nation, will be most decidedly lost to it !

It is for His Majesty's Ministers to weigh well the force of these facts.

The conduct of their illustrious predecessor Mr. Pitt (in whose steps they profess to tread), was in general regulated by the "evidence of facts." I trust that, on the present important occasion, they will adhere to *his* wise and politic system; in so doing, they will adopt the principles of that great statesman, which were decidedly in favor of the Indian trade remaining exclusively with the Company, as will appear evident from his speech delivered in the House of Commons on the 11th March 1793; and I cannot more appropriately conclude this address than in Mr. Pitt's own words, quoted from that speech; *viz.* "I have no hesitation in saying, that
" when all the circumstances are fully
" before the House, I am confident that
" a renewal of the Company's Charter

“ .will appear to be much for the interest
“ of the Country !”

VERAX.

THE END.

A
LETTER
TO
THE RIGHT HONORABLE
The Earl of Buckinghamshire.
PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE AFFAIRS OF INDIA,
On the Subject of an
OPEN TRADE
TO
INDIA.

LONDON:
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A LETTER, &c.

MY LORD,

AFTER perusing the proceedings which have taken place at the EAST INDIA HOUSE, respecting the Renewal of the Company's exclusive Privileges, it is utterly impossible for an individual, who feels at all interested in the welfare of his Country, and the preservation of its Constitution, not to experience sentiments of equal regret and surprize at the communication made to the Court of Directors, in your Lordship's Letter of 4th January, 1813, viz. that it was the intention of His Majesty's Ministers to transfer the Indian Trade, both Import and Export, to the Out-ports. In referring to the gracious speech of His Royal Highness the Prince

Regent at the opening of Parliament, it appears that his Royal Highness called upon the Legislature to make such an arrangement “ *as may best promote the prosperity of the* “ *British possessions in India, and at the* “ *same time secure the greatest advantages to* “ *the Commerce and Revenue of His Majesty’s* “ *Dominions.*” If your Lordship be of opinion that by recommending Parliament to open the Trade to the Out-ports, you will fulfil the duties attached to the high station which your Lordship fills as President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, in a manner which will secure the greatest advantages to the Commerce and Revenue of His Majesty’s Dominions, I must deeply lament such a determination; and as there is still a short period left previous to its being finally discussed in Parliament, I do myself the honor of addressing this Letter to your Lordship, in which I shall endeavour to shew the impolicy of opening the Trade, even to the Port of London: after which I shall bring to your Lordship’s notice the fatal consequences which will result to the individuals

interested in the continuance of the East India Trade to the Port of London, should the same be transferred to the Out-ports : and I shall conclude by recalling to your Lordship's recollection the opinions entertained on the Indian subject by those enlightened statesmen now no more,* whose opinions while they lived, your Lordship and your noble coadjutors in office were always disposed to receive with deference.

The *importance* of the subject is admitted by all to be great, and as it must be evident *whence* that importance has arisen, it behoves those in whose hands the task of ensuring the greatest benefit to this country from our Indian possessions is placed, to guard against turning the stream from its present channel, through which such great advantages, in every point of view, have been realized to this kingdom ; and permitting so fruitful a source to expend itself in rivulets as insignificant, as the grounds for expecting that great benefits will be derived

* The Right Hon. Wm. Pitt. The Late Lord Melville.

from such a change, will prove unfounded and fallacious.

The first object in our Indian Trade which presents itself, to use the words of the late Lord Melville, "*is to furnish the means of exporting British Manufactures to the fullest extent, to bring raw materials from India, to open full scope to the remittance of fortunes from India, AND FINALLY TO CRUSH OR BRING TO THE RIVER THAMES THE CLANDESTINE TRADE.*" This it cannot be denied is or ought to be the principal object in any system which may be devised for our Indian Trade. Let me then ask your Lordship if the means of exporting British manufactures to the fullest extent has not been most amply attained, when they can be purchased in India at prime cost, and when ships returning to India cannot get cargoes, because no one will send out goods, for the sale of which a market cannot be found.

I will ask your Lordship whether it is not sufficient proof that the raw materials have

been imported from India in the fullest extent, when the warehouses of this country are groaning under unsaleable produce ?

I will ask your Lordship whether it is not a sufficient proof, that Indian commerce has been extended greatly beyond the bounds of policy, when individuals waive the mode of remitting home their fortunes through commerce, and avail themselves of drawing on the Company's Home Treasury to a most enormous extent ?

It is only then on the principle, that greater advantages would be derived to the country in the way of revenue, and a greater number of individuals benefited, that a change in the commercial system of India, as at present carried on, can with any justice be urged. It will therefore be well to consider in the first instance, whether these two advantages are likely to be realized by opening the Trade, and whether it is worth while to hazard an experiment, in the trial of which, the banks that confine the trade

within its present fruitful channel, will be irrevocably broken down and destroyed.

With respect to the increase in the Revenue.—No one will deny that, the greater the quantity of goods imported, the greater the duty will be; but as the duty is not payable till the goods are sold, it will follow of course that till the period of sale arrive, the Revenue will not be benefited.

With respect to the Exports, it is true the case is different, because the greater the export, the greater is the immediate benefit to the Home Treasury, as all goods pay duty before they are shipped for foreign parts.

It will not be denied that the exports to India ought to be regulated by the price which European goods sell for in India. An overflow of European exports will cause a depreciation in the value, consequently the exports must be abridged till the scarcity of goods in the Indian market brings the price

to the standard at which it will yield a profit to the merchant. The same reasoning applies to the Import Trade, for if the Exports either yield little profit or are attended with loss, then the private trader must send bullion or find credit in India to purchase goods for the European market. In the present state of the country an exportation of bullion cannot be made, and if the goods are to be bought on credit, the promise of payment can only be made on the assumption that the goods will find a sale.

* The produce of India now in this country in Company's goods, and goods of the Private Trade, amounts in value to no less a sum than Ten Millions sterling; and it is admitted that British Manufactures may be purchased in Calcutta for less than the original prime cost in England: the natural deduction then is, that there is already more Indian produce in this country than we can get rid of, and that our Exports to India greatly exceed the demand made for them.

What then can be expected from an open Trade? What benefit can be derived? The Imports and Exports, may probably be greater, but of what earthly benefit if not saleable?—It must be evident even to the meanest capacity, that it will be the source of greater embarrassment, than assistance, to the revenue, as the capitals hazarded in such a trade can never be expected to return common interest, and the sinking the said capitals in such purchases will be a positive evil to Great Britain, by locking up funds, which might otherwise be employed for more beneficial purposes.

It appears clearly by the statement made by a Director in his place, at the discussion at the East India House, on the 26th ultimo, that the whole of the Trade or return of India to all the European States through or to America, through foreigners, and through Great Britain, will be required to make a remittance to England, according to the present state of affairs with that country.

By the printed papers, page 56. it appears that the Trade, on an average of Six years, was, as follows; it is probably nearly the same amount at present, viz.

Imports from India by the East India Company	1,351,483
Ditto by Commanders and Officers of the Company's Ships	323,167
Ditto by British Private Traders	946,956
Ditto by Americans	800,547
Ditto by Foreign Europeans	406,292
	<hr/>
	3,828,445

European Disbursement for the Territory, which must be returned	650,000
Interest of the Debt, which is at the option of the holders to have Bills for	1,500,000
Cloathing for the Armies abroad	300,000
Exports by the Company	500,000
By the Captains and Officers	469,956
By the Private Traders	500,072
	<hr/>

	4,220,028
Sum that may be possibly remitted through China	500,000
	<hr/>
	3,720,028

If this statement be correct, even supposing that goods or bullion be sent out in addition to India, how are the returns from India to be made, since here is the whole of the Trade from India to Europe and America absorbed for the return that must at present be made.

Your Lordship appears convinced of the necessity of the China Trade remaining a monopoly; and as India has contributed at times in a degree to the China investment, and as the company has made successful efforts to widen the circle of their commerce from India to China, so as to diminish the quantity of bullion required in the China market, it cannot surely be considered expedient to weaken the credit of the Company by withdrawing from them the Indian part of their exclusive privileges. Will it not even upon the supposition (though unfounded) that the Indian Trade has been upon the whole a losing one to the Company, be hazardous to take it from them, when the connexion of the India and China

Trade has rendered the whole a profitable concern.

Sanguine hopes are indulged by many persons that great emoluments would arise from an open trade to India; these individuals do not advert to the situation of the Company, provided they were dispossessed of their exclusive rights. If their Charter should be taken away, the Company would be a body corporate in perpetuity, and entitled to Trade upon its joint Stock. The most important seats of Trade in India, viz. Calcutta, Fort St. George, Bombay, and also the island of St. Helena, belong undoubtedly to the Company; these possessions are their property, and cannot be taken from them. In addition to these the whole Factories and Commercial Establishments, both in India and the Eastern seas, unquestionably belong to them; these possessions were conveyed to them by the London Company, under parliamentary faith, and a Royal Charter: they were permitted

to build fortifications to protect their factories, and they were to be allowed to carry on a Trade on their joint Stock, though the exclusive privileges should cease. Under these circumstances it may be asked whether individuals, ignorant in every point of view of Asiatic commerce, will hazard a Trade in competition with the East India Company. To use the arguments of the late Lord Melville, "It is easy for the speculator while he merely considers the extent of our dominions in India, and that they are inhabited by fifty millions of our subjects, to fancy that he will find unbounded sale for his goods, but he does not reflect that the climate is against the wear of most of our manufactories; he does not reflect that the religious prejudices of many of the East-Indians forbid their using them; he knows not that the dress of the natives is as fixed and local as their manners: it is easy also for the speculator to suppose that, in such a country as India he will find a market for any quantity of

Earthenware,* but he does not reflect on
 the bulk of the commodity: he has not
 estimated the amount of the freight of it,
 or if he has, he does not know that the
 religious prejudices of many of the Casts
 forbids their using what has been fabrica-
 ted by the impure hands of infidel strangers.
 It is easy for the speculator to imagine
 that if he could find sales for his Cottons
 in India, his riches would keep pace with
 his desires: does he hope to rival his
 master in an art in which he is only an
 imitator, or can he expect, comparing the
 high price of labor in Europe with the
 low price of it in India, that he can under-
 sell him there?"

* It may not be wandering from the subject to
 remark, that whilst Ministers are receiving daily Peti-
 tions from the Manufactures of Staffordshire, complain-
 ing of the want of vent for their China, that the Li-
 censes granted by the Board of Trade for a partial
 Trade to the Continent, has been the cause of an im-
 portation to this country of Continental China in such
 quantities that its cheapness has been the cause of
 keeping our Manufactures entirely out of the market.

I have seen no arguments advanced, nor can I conceive any regulations, should the Trade be transferred 'o the Out-ports, which will secure our possessions in India from being over-run by desperate speculators from all parts of the British dominions, indeed from every part of Europe; who would purchase goods of any quality, ruin of course the quality of Indian manufactures, and by sending the produce of them indiscriminately to all the European markets, soon put a period to the Trade; for it is out of the power of your Lordship, in the event of an open trade from the Out-ports, to frame regulations, which would oblige every speculator to bring to Great Britain his cargo, when he knows that by proceeding direct to other parts of Europe, his gain will be sufficient, after meeting any imposition which may be inflicted upon him for such deviation on his return to this country (should he ever return), unless your Lordship has been fortunate enough to discover a principle which is superior in the mind of a speculator to that of *self-interest*. It is

a severe truth, that individuals are to be found in every nation ready to aid in schemes of enterprize, in direct opposition to the country to which they belong ; so strong is the love of gain, and so far will the spirit of speculation induce people to carry their adventures ; and it is the unsuccessful result of such adventures that induce them to be guilty of acts, at the bare thought of which, they would have shuddered in the first instance.

It is said that the speculations will be circumscribed by the means which the individuals concerned therein possess. To prove that this will not be the case, it is only necessary for me to refer your Lordship to the grant made by Parliament the 4th of April, 1811, (51 Geo. 3, cap. 16) of six millions, to assist the credit of individuals who had speculated to such an enormous extent in the South American trade, the result of which it was to be hoped would have in some degree allayed that spirit ; but unfortunately it appears, to have been only

smothered for a time, to burst out with greater fury. Would it be credited by those who lived twenty years ago, that an individual should have had the effrontery to trade to the extent of half a million, upon a capital of twenty thousand pounds? My Lord, this spirit of speculation, by carrying the exports to such an extent, may be of a temporary assistance to His Majesty's Treasury, but to any man accustomed to look a little into futurity, it must appear to be a system pregnant with the most ruinous consequences to the individual trader, as well as to the country at large.

These extensive speculations, in which individuals have been encouraged to embark under false prospects of gain, have created a degree of luxury which it is impossible to contemplate without the most serious apprehension; under the imaginary wealth which is calculated upon as realized, the establishments of men are increased, the shop is given up for the warehouse, the appellation of shopkeeper is despised, and that

of merchant is assumed; carriages and equipages follow, till at last it is discovered that the speculation turns out contrary to the cherished expectations; instead of large fortunes being realized, great losses are sustained, and the goods which have been sent out on speculation, and paid for by bills forming a fictitious capital, are sold (if sold at all) for half the prime cost, the inevitable consequence of which is, that a succession of bankruptcies takes place: not only the manufacturer and speculator suffer, but the actual revenue of the country is lessened, for had the individual gone on in the regular course of business, he would have been looked upon as a regular contributor towards defraying the expences of the nation. Such proceedings must give rise to fallacious opinions as to the actual revenue of the country, for as long as the spirit of speculation is encouraged, so long will the revenue of this country *apparently* flourish, but such a system can only be compared to a rapid decline, which we endeavour to persuade ourselves will not

end fatally, and we are deceived by the appearances, which grow more favorable the nearer the sufferer approaches to the last moment of his existence.

It may be said, my Lord, that I have overdrawn the picture of distress attendant on the spirit of Speculation which at present pervades this country ; but on a reference to the weekly Gazettes, they will be found to bear ample testimony to the truth of the coloring.

It is said that the Trade, as now carried on, is to the total exclusion of the British merchant ; surely it must have escaped recollection that, by the Act of 1793, the Company is required to set apart three thousand tons annually, for the use of private persons, which have never been occupied to even half the extent ; and it appears from indisputable authority, that the quantity of tonnage engaged by the East India Company, for the Private Traders of the United Kingdom (exclusively of that allowed to be ex-

ported in the Privilege of their own captains and officers) amounted, during the last six years, to Sixty-three Thousand Tons, and that during that period, only Sixteen Thousand Tons of every species of manufacture (including beer, and four thousand tons of wine) have been actually engaged and shipped to India: and at this very moment, my Lord, when a want of tonnage is so loudly complained of to export British manufacture, Country Ships are under the necessity of returning to India without cargoes, no individual being inclined to ship goods for which he knows too well there is not any sale in the Indian markets.

The leading arguments made use of by the Supporter of an Open Trade, are founded upon the doctrine held by Dr. Adam Smith, whose opinions on the subject of Monopoly, will always, theoretically speaking, carry great weight, but when deduced to practice will lose much of their convincing powers. Monopolies are only bad when they engross a Trade to the prejudice of the com-

munity at large, and oblige them to become purchasers of indispensable commodities at an exorbitant rate, whereas the Monopoly, if it can be so called, (considering the general acceptation of the word) enjoyed by the East India Company, enables the inhabitants of this kingdom to obtain every article of Indian produce at the very lowest possible rate, and of the best quality. A noble author writing on the subject of Political Oeconomy, observes, that Commerce pushed to the extent to which the spirit of speculation would induce individuals to carry it, would involve not only themselves but their country in inevitable ruin; it may therefore be urged with great reason, that the Indian Trade being reserved to the East India Company, not only causes a regular and ample supply of Indian produce, but is the cause of preventing numerous individuals from embarking in a trade, which cannot produce to the nation at large, much less to the persons who seek to have the India and China Trade thrown open, those advantages which are so strenuously held

forth, but so delusively conceived. It is no easy matter to convince any set of men of their error, who fancy their interests and fortunes are concerned in prosecuting a measure, no matter how absurd, when calmly contemplated; it therefore becomes an imperative duty on those who have the power in their own hands, not to get rid of it before they are convinced it will not be used in a manner detrimental to the state.

At the meetings of our Manufacturing Towns, it has been Resolved, that the exclusive privileges of the East India Company are a monopoly, and that it is for the interest of the manufacturers that the monopoly should be done away. In the words of the late Lord Melville, I would wish to ask the Projectors of such Resolutions, whether they have examined what the Company has been, or what it now is? To whom do they owe the Riches which they have acquired from the Cotton Manufactures? To the East India Company! To whom do they owe the Riches which they have acquired from the

cultivation of Indigo ? To the East India Company ! To whom has Great Britain been indebted for the great increase of its Shipping ? To the East India Company ! If from other sources our industry and navigation have been encreased, the original obligation is not on that account the less, and ought not to be forgotten : some small gratitude is surely due for all these benefits.

It is generally admitted that for the first three or four years, the Indian Trade may be carried on at a loss, but it will ultimately prove beneficial. I may be permitted to ask, whether the Revenue of this Country is in so flourishing a state that Ministers can afford to risque a certain income of between four and five Millions in that time ; and what is proposed to be done with the produce of India which shall be brought to this country, the warehouses of which are overstocked to the amount of ten Millions ? and, *vice versa*, with respect to the export of British manufactures to India, which may be bought there for prime cost ?

The result of an Open Trade will be the accumulation of difficulty and misfortune.

*

I now come to the proposition for a transfer of the Trade to the Out-ports. The arguments already urged against opening the Trade even to the port of London, will apply with a redoubled force to this proposition; I shall therefore proceed, as I proposed, to point out to your Lordship the ruin which will result to the individuals interested in a continuance of the East India Trade to the Port of London, should it be removed to the Out-ports.

My Lord, this is a part of the subject which calls for more consideration than has hitherto been given to it, as it not only involves the livelihood of a numerous body of the poorer classes of the community, but it goes to nothing short of utter ruin to the individuals engaged in the following branches of Trade, as connected with the present system of conducting the Indian commerce, viz.

To a most numerous body of Merchants and Traders, engaged in the India and China Trade, from the port of London, all of the highest respectability in the commercial world :

To the several persons concerned, employed, and interested, in the building or equipment of East India Shipping in the port of London :

To the numerous class of Commanders and Officers in the Naval service of the East India Company :

To the Manufacturers of Long Ells, resident in the counties of Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Somerset and Gloucester, added to which are the Dyers, Setters and Calendriers, Packers, Inspectors of Woollen Goods, Pressers and Cloth Drawers ; all employed in the service of the East India Company.

The first class of individuals, viz. the Merchants and Traders, has sent three Petitions to Parliament, and each of the other classes has also petitioned the Legislature. This is a mode of expostulation to which it

cannot be supposed they would have resorted, if the injury they anticipated by opening the Trade, were not great, indeed little less than ruinous to them.

The Common Council of the City of London, has also petitioned Parliament, and the Inhabitants of the Town of Gravesend. It may, my Lord, be considered futile, to quote some of the bodies before mentioned, but it must be allowed, that even individually, they carry much respectability with them, and collectively, it is impossible to point out so large a number of his Majesty's subjects more deserving of the care of the Legislature, in every point of view, than those herein enumerated; and that individual must be a very subtle reasoner indeed, who can adduce arguments sufficiently convincing, to prove not only the policy, but what is more worthy of attention, the justice of injuring one part of His Majesty's subjects, by depriving them of a trade in which they have embarked their lives and fortunes, and from which this country has in times of

distress reaped the most essential benefits, to throw it into the hands of individuals, who at the best are but speculators, indulging themselves in wild theories of fancied and endless riches.

It is not necessary for me to point out to your Lordship, the great injury that will arise to the Merchants, by transferring the Indian Trade to the Out Ports, as I am sure your Lordship must have given so important a part of the subject that consideration which it demands. I shall therefore content myself with entreating your Lordship's attention to a few observations in favor of the other classes, as the causes of the grievances they will suffer, cannot be so evident to your Lordship.

The persons concerned in the building and equipment of East India Shipping, are Ship Builders, Shipwrights, Ship Chandlers, Mast Makers, Block and Pump Makers, Boat Builders, Ship Joiners, Ship Plumbers, Ship Painters and Glaziers, Smiths, Copper Smiths,

Anchor Smiths, Rope Makers, Sail Makers, Riggers, Lightermen and Watermen. The persons carrying on the trades abovementioned have long been engaged therein, and have constructed and built large Docks, Manufactories and Warehouses, Storehouses and other premises, at great expence; they have invested large Capitals, and have engaged numerous workmen.

The Establishments so formed have been encreased and carried to an extent which has tended to characterize the Port of London, in its naval establishment, as the most extensive of any in the known world. The removal of the trade to the Out Ports would consequently prove ruinous to the individuals whose capitals have been embarked in the formation of the said establishments. The numerous classes of workmen and artizans employed therein, have become attached by long residence to the places where the said trades have been carried on, and connected by marriage with families settled about those establishments. These poor

people would be thrown out of employment, and cast upon the world without the smallest chance of finding employment at the Out Ports, where it must naturally be supposed are to be found men accustomed to the different branches of equipping and fitting out Shipping, and who are equally attached to the parts where they have long resided, and who would be naturally jealous of having their labours superseded by numerous classes of artizans from the Metropolis.

Another very important point for consideration presents itself in the removal of the Trade to the Out Ports; by such an act, the country will be deprived of a resource in times of immediate danger and emergency, inasmuch as the building of India Shipping in the Thames, concentrates in one spot a numerous body of mechanics, who have already rendered the most essential services to the naval power of the country, and who are always capable of affording their united services at a few hours notice,

in cases of any great national calamity, an object which even great sacrifices ought to be made to attain; added to which, the large scale of India Shipping has supplied, at moments most critical to the welfare of the country, great addition to its naval strength, a resource which would be lost if the Trade were thrown open, as the Shipping which would be employed at the Out Ports would be of so small a class, as to render them wholly unfit to be converted into Ships of War.

This statement, my Lord, of the injury which will accrue to the India shipping interest by a transfer of the trade to the Out Ports, will, I hope, meet with the consideration it merits, and I shall quote the speech of My Lord Castlereagh, in the House of Commons, on the Shipping of the Company, in May 1803. "His Lordship could not but suggest to the consideration of the House, that the Shipping in the service of the East India Company was of a nature to be at any time converted into a great ad-

"dition to the National force of the Empire.
 "The Ships of 1200 tons might upon any
 "public exigency be armed as Ships of the
 "Line; the Ships of 800 tons might be equally
 "employed as Frigates, and those of 500 tons
 "might be employed as Sloops of War."
 With how much more reason may that argu-
 ment be urged at the present moment,
 when the war we are involved in with
 America ~~h~~ moves us to attend as much as we
 possibly ~~fin~~ to the augmentation of our
 Naval power.

I shall now, my Lord, draw your attention
 to the injury that will be suffered by the
 third class, viz. The commanders and officers
 of the Ships in the Company's service.

The Naval Service of the East India Com-
 pany has been looked upon for a long period
 of years as a *national establishment*: the sons
 of respectable families have entered into
 that service with a view of supporting them-
 selves and those depending upon them, and
 it has been frequently the case, so highly

respectable is the naval service of the Company considered, from the qualifications required to enable individuals to fill the situation of officers in it, that time served in it was formerly taken as part of the period required to be served in the Royal Navy, to qualify for a Lieutenancy: the officers concerned in the naval service of the Company, have enjoyed advantages which no other persons can possibly have, who have altogether upon their own accounts; they have been always intent upon finding out new articles of Exports and Imports, without success, and it may be fairly concluded, that no new system can be devised which will give such encouragement to speculation, as one which has appropriated one-twelfth of the whole shipping employed, to such a number of individuals *free of the charge for freight*, and who are all intent upon making the greatest advantage of the indulgence given to them.

If, therefore, the Company's exclusive privileges be annihilated, or materially in-

The Dyers of the East India Company are obliged to have been a certain length of time in the business before they can be appointed to that situation, they are obliged to have their dye-houses and plants furnished and fitted up in a particular manner, the expence attendant on which is not less than £200,000.; should therefore the trade be thrown open, the establishments in which so large a sum has been expended will be rendered useless, and the consequence will be ruinous to this class of individuals connected with the Company.

The Setters and Calendriers have also expended large sums of money in the necessary establishments, which in case of the dispersion of the East India Company's Trade, would be dismantled, causing great injury not only to the freehold proprietor, but to the individuals in this branch of trade, as there

of exporting goods for which there is no market?" and can it be supposed that the manufacturers would petition against their own interests, if they thought an open trade would be beneficial to them?

is no other course of life to which they can turn to get a living, and the situation of their workmen would be in the highest degree distressing:

The Packers are a body of tradesmen employed by the Company, who are obliged to serve a regular apprenticeship to make them competent to be taken into the service of the Company. The removal of the Company's trade would in this particular branch occasion incalculable injury to a very great body of his Majesty's subjects. So great is the confidence reposed in this class of tradesmen by the Company, that Woollen manufactures, to the extent of a million sterling annually, are placed under their final care till ready for shipping. The particular manner in which the goods for packing are delivered out week by week, for nine months in the year, gives regular employment to great numbers of the poorer class, and by the regular payment of the Company, proves a most beneficial thing to a very great body of the community; a removal of the trade

to the Out Ports would impose certain ruin on this class connected with the Company.

The Inspectors of Woollen Goods to the Company, are sworn Officers, they are men of long tried abilities, and would be literally thrown out of all means whereby they could gain a livelihood if the Trade should be transferred to the Out Ports.

The same fatal effects would be felt by the Pressers and Cloth Drawers employed by the Company. By the removal therefore of the Trade to the Out Ports, the classes herein enumerated would be deprived of the means by which they can earn their livelihood, their property would be annihilated, and the speculative advantage to one set of individuals would be founded on positive ruin to many others.

The Buyers of Piece Goods and others interested in the sale of East India Piece Goods will be most materially affected by the Trade being transferred to the Out-ports,

nor will the Revenue suffer less. I shall make use of their own words, as pointing out the injury that will arise to them more plainly than I possibly can :

“ That as Piece Goods are of an uncertain value, and depend very much on competition, it would not be possible to obtain for them at an Out-port the same prices as in London ; and, consequently, that we should be undersold at the Out-ports, unable to carry on our business with the honour, respectability, and advantage we have hitherto done, and probably obliged to abandon the pursuit many of us have been engaged in for a great number of years, and driven to seek fresh undertakings, at a time when little benefit can be expected from them. And it is the opinion of this meeting, that it is the decided interest of the importers of Piece Goods themselves, that they should be continued to be brought to sale in the port of London (as the emporium of commerce) in the way that they now are, where they will have the benefit of the Company's own assortment.”

That in all silk and prohibited goods, and even in white goods, if not brought to the port of London, it is much to be feared, no restraints could prevent smuggling; which would occasion a loss of the whole duty to government, be seriously injurious to the fair trader, and especially to the manufacturers of silk goods in Spitalfields and elsewhere.

“That the introduction of Indian piece goods to the consumption of this kingdom at low prices, in consequence of a total evasion of duty, or a payment of duty on reduced prices, would be a serious injury to the British cotton manufacturers.”

“That the same ill effects would occur to the manufacturers of Lancashire and Scotland, if sales of Indian piece goods were frequently to be made at Liverpool and Glasgow, or in any of the ports in the neighbourhood of the manufactories.”

That it is of the greatest advantage to the great body of British cotton manufacturers, to confine the import of India piece goods to one port, as it gives them the opportunity of viewing them, and regulating their manufactories, according to the quantity and sorts intended for sale; whereas if individuals were allowed to import piece goods, and sell them at an outport, the British manufacturer would never know what quantity might be brought into the market, or how to regulate his manufactory.

That the principal factories in India for muslins, callicoes, and silk goods, being in the hands of our East-India Company, and the greatest attention being paid to maintain the qualities and fabrics of each sort, it is reasonable to conclude, that the same influx of foreigners, who purchase very large quantities of the national manufactures, will attend the sales at the India House (whenever the politics of Europe will allow them to come) as used to resort here for a series of years, provided the quantity exposed to sale

by the East-India Company is of sufficient importance to draw their attention.

That the plan now pursued, of having periodical half yearly sales of piece goods, and publishing a declaration, every three months previous to the sale, prevents every merchant and manufacturer from being suddenly surprized by an excessive quantity being brought on, and enables the foreign buyer to make his arrangements to attend the sale, or to send his orders.

Another establishment of great magnitude and importance to the City of London, as well as to the individual concerned, will be rendered useless by a transfer of the Indian Trade to the Out-ports, and it is only necessary for me to refer to the Act of the Legislature to impress upon your Lordship's mind the necessity of giving this part of the subject due consideration, before you proceed to recommend measures which must involve the dearest interests of the several persons connected therewith.

By the Act of 43 Geo. III. cap. 126, An Act for the further improvement of the Port of London, by making Docks and other Works at Blackwall, for the accommodation of the East India Shipping in the said Port, it is enacted that, Whereas the Ships in the employ of the East India Company are of larger size than other Vessels employed by Merchants in Trade, and many of them nearly equal in bulk to the Ships of the Line in the Royal Navy; And whereas the Cargoes and Merchandise on board of such Ships ARE OF GREAT VALUE AND NATIONAL IMPORTANCE; and whereas by the present system of loading and discharging the Cargoes of such Ships, the Navigation of the River Thames is frequently impeded, and delays, losses and inconveniencies experienced, and the Cargoes of such Ships are subject to plunder, and the East India Company and Owners thereof injured and THE PUBLIC REVENUE DEFRAUDED TO A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT; And whereas if GOOD AND SUFFICIENT WET DOCKS and Basins, with necessary accommodations and requisites for the reception of East India Ships were made at or near Blackwall, in the County of Middlesex,

the evils and mischiefs aforesaid might be greatly remedied and prevented, &c. &c. The Act then goes on to recite under what terms, &c. the said Docks should be built, and the money raised for the purpose.

In Sect. 12 of the said Act, provision is made for the half-yearly payment of the interest on the money borrowed ; and in Sect. 13, the application of the money so borrowed, is directed, first, in paying the *Charges incurred in the passing the said Act ; next, in paying and discharging the consideration of purchase money and other costs, and afterwards in* PAYING SUCH YEARLY OR OTHER SUMS OF MONEY AS THEREIN DIRECTED, FOR COMPENSATION FOR LOSSES AND DEFICIENCY OF TYTHES, TAXES, SEWER RATES AND OTHER RATES AND ASSESSMENTS, &c. &c.

In Sec. 91 it is stated, that in consideration of the great charges and expences in making the said Docks, the rates mentioned in the said Act should be paid by ships loading or unloading.

In Sect. 110 it is enacted, that none of the restrictions for Ships loading or unloading in the East India Company's Dock, shall continue in force for more than twenty-one years, commencing from the date of the first rate being taken.

It appears then, my Lord, that Parliament permitted the construction of the said Docks from a conviction that it would be an *improvement to the City of London*, that it would be the cause of *greater security to the Revenue in securing the Cargoes of Ships* EQUAL IN SIZE TO LINE OF BATTLE SHIPS AND OF GREAT NATIONAL IMPORTANCE.

If the Trade is removed to the Out-ports, this improvement will be rendered useless and become a burthen, unless empty warehouses and dry docks can be considered an improvement. The security arising therefrom to the Revenue is given up, and the Cargoes of Ships, equal in size to Line of Battle Ships and of great National importance, are consequently of no importance. By the

construction of the Docks the Revenue will be deteriorated, for had the buildings still existed which were pulled down to make way for the Docks proposed to be now rendered useless, the inhabitants individually would still have contributed their quota towards the exigencies of the state, which must be now considered a positive loss, as well as the additional loss which will be occasioned by the non-payment of the interest to the individual subscribers; also the non-payment of tythes, assessments, &c. &c.

Secondly. That Parliament permitted individuals to raise large sums of money for the purpose of constructing their Docks. These sums were raised upon the faith of a continuance of the East India Trade to the Port of London, the ships engaged in which Trade were, by the said Act, obliged to enter the Docks, and from the rates paid by the owners of such ships, the individuals were to be paid the interest of the sums advanced by them, and ultimately the principal. If

the Docks be rendered useless by a transfer of the trade, how are the individuals to be reimbursed?

Thirdly. So much importance was attached to the early completion of the said Docks, that in Sect. 91 it is expressly directed they should be constructed as soon as possible, and that even statements of their progress should be laid before Parliament yearly, and

Fourthly. It is enacted that none of the Resolutions of Ships unloading or landing in the East India Docks shall continue in force *for more than twenty-one years* from the date the first rate shall be taken:—surely this provision implies, that at all events individuals concerned had a right to look for a continuance of the Trade, which would oblige the entering of ships into the East India Dock *for the twenty-one years*, and upon the faith of such a continuance they became subscribers towards erecting the said Docks.

I shall now refer to an establishment which will be abolished if the Trade is thrown open. I should not have noticed it had it been ~~the~~ subject which has engaged Parliamentary notice.

By the 37th Geo. III. cap. 74, the Company were enabled to raise and pay the expences of two Regiments of Infantry, to be embodied for the defence and protection of the House and Warehouses of the Company, and for such public services as are mentioned in the said Act.

By the 43d Geo. III. cap. 48, the same Corps was again permitted to be raised, and His Majesty was pleased to accept of the services of the said Brigade of Royal East India Volunteers, and the consent of Parliament was obtained to authorize the charge of the same amongst the ordinary outgoings, charges and expences of the Company. This Corps, whose establishment was ratified by Acts of the Legislature, is to be at once abolished, consisting of Two Thousand men.

LORD CASTLEREAGH, in bringing the matter before Parliament, in 1803, stated, " That
 " an Act of Parliament had expired relating
 " to the appropriating of certain parts of
 " the profits of the East India Company to
 " the support of the Volunteer Corps of the
 " East India House. His Lordship enlarged
 " on the utility of the Corps, which he
 " termed trust-worthy, as being composed
 " of the different servants of the East India
 " Company; the superior officers being per-
 " sons who filled the higher departments;
 " the inferior officers of another class of re-
 " spectable persons; and the privates of the
 " warehousemen, and persons in the lower
 " situations. Provision had been made by a
 " former Act for two Battalions, which he
 " wished to increase to three Battalions.
 " The propriety of the force being thus raised,
 " and provided for, must be manifest to the
 " House; they were to be composed entirely
 " of men known and employed at the East
 " India House, and none could be more
 " worthy of being trusted with the care and
 " preservation of the peace of the Metropo-

“lis upon an emergency. He therefore
 “ moved that the House should resolve itself
 “ into a *Committee of the whole House on the*
 “ *subject.*”

The Company's military stores have supplied Government with arms and appointments at a time when a delay in obtaining such stores might have been of great detriment to the state.

Here, my Lord, is a statement of the ruin which will befall so numerous a body of His Majesty's subjects, and the Establishments that will be broken up. Is it then too much to ask for a Statement of the Reasons or Arguments which induced your Lordship to make this sacrifice. Your Lordship has referred the Chairman and Deputy-Chairman of the East India Company, to the Petitions from those Out-ports to which it is proposed to remove the East India Trade, ~~for~~ those arguments. I shall avail myself of such permission, remarking at the same time, that in your Lordship's Letter to the Chairs of the

4th ultimo, you explicitly state, “ *that you have no difficulty in acquainting them, that the Claims of Merchants connected with the Out-ports, have not been brought before Government by WRITTEN DOCUMENTS.*” And in the following paragraph your Lordship says, “ You may obtain from the Records,” viz. *The WRITTEN Petitions to Parliament, that further information* (viz. the representations which have induced His Majesty’s Ministers to acquiesce in the Transfer of the Trade) which you *appear desirous to possess.*” Pleading my incapacity to reconcile these two paragraphs, I shall proceed to consider these convincing Petitions, confining myself of course to those from the Out-ports, which the Commissioners of the Excise, in their Report referred to in the Debate in the East India House, on the 22d ultimo, consider as the only Ports, which can, with any degree of safety to the Revenue, or the Country, be thrown open to the India Trade; For, say the Commissioners of Excise, *the other Out-ports appear to us for* VARIOUS REASONS INSUFFICIENT.

The Ports stated by the Commissioners
are

HULL

BRISTOL

LIVERPOOL

PLYMOUTH

DOVER, and

PORTSMOUTH.

shall commence with *Bristol*, the Merchants of which city claim as their birth-right, liberty to trade with Kingdoms gained by His Majesty's arms. That the Company's trade has decreased, whilst Foreigners have competed successfully with the Company, and that such Trade has been obstinately denied to the Subjects of the United Kingdom. That the promise of pecuniary participation held out in 1793, has not been realized, but that the Company has made repeated claims on the Public. That the Petitioners rely on *Parliament* disregarding any argument that may be advanced in favour of the Company, as their existence will be the ruin of the Naval greatness of Great Britain, and the downfall of its Independence; and upon these grounds they pray that the Trade may be opened.

With respect to the birth-right of the Petitioners to trade with Territories gained by His Majesty's Army, in opposition to Enactments of the Legislature, it is not for me to decide, but it must not be forgotten that the Company's Troops have been the principal actors in the acquisition of our Indian territories. Does it appear that Foreigners have competed successfully with the Company, when the Trade on an average of six years stood as follows: viz.

Annual Average of Exports into
India £2,717,802

D^o D^o D^o by Americans and
Foreign Europeans 1,389,227

Leaving a Balance in favour of
England of 1,328,575

Annual Average of Imports from
India to England 2,621,606

D^o D^o D^o to America and
Foreign Europe 1,206,839

Leaving a Balance in favour of
England of 1,414,767

It therefore appears that this Trade so successfully competed by Foreigners, leaves an Annual Balance in favour of England of nearly Three Millions sterling. How does it appear that the Indian Trade has been obstinately denied to the people of this country, when in the last six years the Tonnage allotted for the use of individuals, exclusively of that allowed to be exported by the Company's Officers in their own Privilege, amounted to, Sixty-three Thousand Tons; and that during that period only Sixteen Thousand Tons of every species of Manufacture (including beer and four thousand tons of wine) have been actually engaged and Shipped to India?

The promise of pecuniary participation held out in 1793, was conditional, viz. If Peace continued in India. With respect to the claims made on the Public for pecuniary assistance, the Advances from the State on that account do not amount to the Disbursements made by the Company, on account of the several Expeditions fitted out at their expence in India, on account of the Public

Service ; and upon what ground of equity could the country with-hold from the East India Company, that relief which they so lavishly granted to support the credit of individual merchants, the 4th of April, 1811. The Petitioners trust that the House of Commons will disregard any arguments, no matter how convincing, that may be urged in favour of the Company ; (I conclude this is the Petition which contains those *arguments* which have had such weight with your Lordship and His Majesty's Ministers). The Petitioners further state that our Naval greatness will be sacrificed by a continuance of the Trade to the East India Company ; how does this agree with my Lord Castlereagh's speech in 1803, wherein his Lordship states, that the Company's Ships of 1200 Tons are fit for Ships of the Line ; their Ships of 800 Tons, for Frigates ; and their Ships of 500 Tons for Sloops of War. It is not improbable that the *arguments* made use of by the Petitioners, may convince your Lordship that 400 Ton Ships, of which burthen those Ships from the Out-ports are

to consist, are equally well adapted for Ships of the Line and Frigates.

The MERCHANT VENTURERS OF BRISTOL come next, they assert their general right to an open Trade, they state that the same will tend to enlarge the means of diffusing articles of British Manufacture throughout India and the Islands and vast dominions of China and will lead to the discovery of new Channels and unexplored Regions of Commerce. That the freedom of trading to India granted to the United States has enabled them to supply the West India Islands to the injury of British Subjects. Here in truth, is an enlarged view of the subject, boundless Regions which are to yield countless Riches. There is to be a voyage of discovery conducted by men who possess not the smallest knowledge of the language, manners or wants of the natives, or of the commerce of India. It is said that the Americans from the privilege granted to them of trading to India have been enabled to supply our West India Colonies to the injury of the British Merchant. Here, my

Lord, the cloven foot shews itself. The Open Traders must have the privilege of going direct to the West Indies from India, without coming to Great Britain, for if they come to England first, how can they compete with the Americans? our Revenue cannot but flourish under such an extension!

The BRISTOL DOCK COMPANY have also petitioned; they represent that they have constructed Docks at great Expence, anticipating an increase of Trade, and that those expectations have been disappointed, owing principally to the unexampled state of affairs ON THE CONTINENT OF EUROPE, AND therefore pray that the Indian Trade may be thrown open. The claims of the Dock Companies of London for the protection of the Legislature are surely as strong as those of the Bristol Dock Company, nay stronger, for the East India Dock Company constructed their Docks specifically for India Shipping: the Bristol Dock Company in consequence of an increase in their Trade: these Petitioners, unlike the rest of their Brethren, candidly

admit that which must be evident to the unbiassed mind of every individual, that the unexampled state of affairs on the Continent of Europe is the sole cause of the stagnation of Trade.

The Commissioners of Excise it appears state in their Report already alluded to, *that the passage up the Bristol Channel furnishes great opportunities for landing goods clandestinely, especially for the last twenty miles, and in consequence of the late alterations, the Shipping lies afloat in the midst of that City, without any other security than the locking of the Hatchways and other Communications with the Cargo.*

The MERCHANTS OF KINGSTON-UPON-HULL I shall next allude to; their Petition contains arguments no doubt equally as convincing to your Lordship as the Petition from Bristol, being nearly similar in point of doctrine, excepting that the Town of Hull is situated on a great estuary, the Humber communicating by inland Navigation with the

principal Manufacturing districts, and therefore affording greater opportunities for smuggling.

THE DOCK COMPANY at KINGSTON-UPON-HULL have also petitioned, their claims cannot be considered better founded than those of the Bristol Dock Company.

The Commissioners of Excise state in their Report, *that the run to Hull from the Channel may perhaps be reckoned equivalent to the Navigation up the River Thames, and no Ships from the East Indies should be permitted to pass round the north of Scotland. There is great danger of smuggling within the Humber.*

THE PETITION FROM PLYMOUTH is entirely barren of argument, and they rest their hopes from the general assertion that the whole of His Majesty's subjects have a right to participate in the India Trade, and therefore pray that the same may be opened.

THE PORTS OF DOVER AND PORTSMOUTH come next. It does not appear that those places

have petitioned Parliament. Their gratitude to the Commissioners of the Excise for including them in so beneficial an extension ought to be sincere.

The Commissioners state, *that the Ships enter into Plymouth, Portsmouth, and Dover, immediately from the Sea, and the passage is shorter than to London, but the security is also by Locks only and Tidesmen.*

The PETITION FROM THE LIVERPOOL MERCHANTS, contains as little argument as that from Plymouth. The Petition from the CORPORATION OF LIVERPOOL, states, *that an ample field is now open for the investment of that capital which has hitherto been employed in other channels of Trade; and that whilst they lament the distressing suspension of Commerce at this juncture, they cannot but believe that the era is now arrived when relief may be granted.* These, my Lord, are the arguments of the Corporation.

The LIVERPOOL DOCK COMPANY state, *that by the enterprize of its inhabitants, it has raised itself from the situation of an humble fishing town to the distinguished rank and importance of the second port in the kingdom; that being heard by the Merchants at large two years ago, when the Trade was in great prosperity, they obtained leave to construct larger Docks for general purposes.*

The Liverpool Dock Company admit that their town has been raised from the situation of a fishing town to the distinguished rank of the second port in the kingdom; *this has been effected entirely without the Indian Trade; surely some check ought to be given to their ambition. I confess I am at a loss to understand upon what grounds that policy is founded which has for its object the destruction of the Capital of a kingdom to benefit its Out-ports; it is like drawing the blood from the heart to support the extremities.*

The Commissioners of Excise are said to

state in their Report, *that the entrance into Liverpool from the West is not of great length, and for the most part is open*; BUT NOTHING CAN BE BETTER CALCULATED FOR SMUGGLING, NOTWITHSTANDING THE CARE OF TIDEMEN ON SHIP BOARD AND THE VIGILANCE OF A NIGHTLY WATCH, THAN THE DOCKS AT THIS PORT—OPEN ON ALL SIDES AND SURROUNDED BY SHIPS, WAREHOUSES, PUBLIC HOUSES AND OTHER BUILDINGS.

Here then, my Lord, is a statement of the Petitions from the only ports to which your Revenue Commissioners consider it safe to extend the open Trade; here is also a statement of the principal arguments made use of in those Petitions, with the few observations I have been induced to make thereon; and the opinion of the Commissioners of Excise as to the facilities which these ports afford for smuggling. It is not necessary for me to say more; I shall therefore leave them for your Lordship's consideration.

I have now, my Lord, arrived at that part of the India question, which must, in every

point of view, be considered the most important. I have been led to consider the Commercial concerns of the Company, as connected with this country in the abstract ; but, my Lord, I shall now look at the question in the light in which it must be viewed when brought before Parliament, viz. that of a great Political Question, involving the interests ~~and~~ happiness of thousands in this country, as connected with its commerce, but affecting the whole Population of Great Britain, as connected with the preservation of our Constitution :—and when considered as relating to India, involving the happiness, indeed the very existence, of Fifty Millions of our fellow creatures ! I confess the magnitude of the subject alarms me ;* because I see it possible that an ill-judged policy may be the cause of demolishing a magnificent structure which has existed for upwards of two centuries, supported by an honorable Body, who have at all times, waived personal considerations for the benefit of their country.

* The Sum total necessary to carry on the concern of the Company, is £51,182,127. Vide Printed Papers, No. 1. p. 59

You, my Lord, in conjunction with His Majesty's Ministers, inform the Court of Directors, that you are willing to bring before Parliament a proposition for the renewal of the Company's Charter, provided the Company will give up their exclusive privileges of Trade; or in other words, permit the Trade to and from India to be opened. The Court agrees that the Trade shall be opened, but that the same should be confined to the Port of London. This stipulation the Court has supported by arguments most conclusive.

These arguments appear, in your Lordship's opinion, to have been successfully rebutted by those more cogent ones urged by the Petitioners from the Out-ports,* and upon these arguments your Lordship relies for the support of Parliament, in depriving the East India Company of a privilege which they refuse to surrender in the unconditional manner demanded of them; because they consider that by so doing, they shall place

* See pages 52 & 62.

themselves in that situation which will render it utterly impossible for them to fulfil the duties Commercial and Political, devolving upon them, in a manner satisfactory to themselves and beneficial to the country.

The conduct of the Court of Directors in the negotiation, as far as an individual is capable of judging from the papers before the public, must be considered highly honorable. It is such as must retort upon those persons who hope to support the cause of the Petitioners, by imputing to the Directors interested motives for the line of conduct they have pursued (viz. the preservation of their patronage), the calumnious and unfounded assertion.

The Court of Directors frankly declares the well-grounded fears it entertains, that the affairs of India cannot be conducted with benefit to this country, if an open trade from the Out-ports be permitted; as the same must lead to an unfettered intercourse with India, and not all the regulations wh

may be devised will prevent colonization, and the alienation of British India from this country will close the fatal project. It is on this broad principle that the Court of Directors and the Company stand forward, for the preservation of their exclusive privileges, which can alone enable them to avert such disastrous consequences. Does this conduct bear the mark of interested motives, my Lord? The Court of Directors by acquiescing in the proposition of His Majesty's Ministers, would secure to themselves the patronage so much talked of, but the Court will not accept it in exchange for the interests of their Constituents and their Country.

The country is told that it is ridiculous to fancy that the Constitution of England can be affected by any change which may be made in the political or commercial situation of the East India Company. My Lord, the Constitution will be affected; into whose hands will the Government of India, and the Patronage appertaining thereto devolve, if

the Company be deprived of it? Why, into the hands of the Minister of the day; and that patronage, when engrossed by an individual, would fortify the Minister who could persuade the Parliament of this country to accede to such a measure, with a phalanx which will place him in a situation to bid defiance to his Prince and to the People of England.

The occurrences of 1783 bear ample proof that the country then felt that the Constitution would have been endangered had the Minister succeeded in getting possession of the Government of India and the Patronage attached thereto. Is there less danger to be apprehended from such an attempt at the present moment?

Mr. PITT, on the 14th January, 1784, in proposing his Bill to Parliament, said, *“That in the Bill which he proposed to move for, he had governed himself by the ideas of the Proprietors of India Stock, and by THE*

" SENSE OF THOSE MEN WHO WERE MOST HABITUALLY
 " ATTACHED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE SUBJECT."

On the 6th July, 1784, Mr. PITT said,
 " Government and Commerce were the two
 " great objects to be looked to. THE COMMERCE
 " OF THE COMPANY BELONGED EXCLUSIVELY TO
 " THEM. THE COMMERCE THEREFORE TO AND
 " FROM INDIA, HE MEANT TO LEAVE WHERE IT
 " OUGHT TO BE LEFT — IN THE HANDS OF THE
 " COMPANY. It had, he remarked, been held,
 " that Commercial Companies could not go-
 " vern Empires; but that was a matter of
 " speculation which general experience pro-
 " ved to be not true in practice, however
 " universally admitted in theory. THE EAST
 " INDIA COMPANY HAD CONDUCTED ITS COM-
 " MERCE AND GOVERNED EAST EMPIRES FOR MANY
 " YEARS, AND IT WAS TO BE REMEMBERED THAT
 " THE EAST INDIA COMPANY WAS NO NEW ES-
 " TABLISHMENT. IT RESTED ON CHARTERS AND
 " ACTS OF PARLIAMENT; THOSE CHARTERS OUGHT
 " UNDOUBTEDLY TO BE REGARDED, AND AS FAR AS
 " POSSIBLE THE RIGHTS EXERCISED AND ENJOYED
 " UNDER THEM, OUGHT TO BE HELD SACRED."

Mr. Pitt, on the 11th March, 1793, expressed himself in the following words:—

" I have no hesitation in saying, that when all
 " the circumstances are fully before the
 " House, I am confident that a *Renewal of the*
 " *Company's Charter will appear to be much*
 " *for the interest of the country.*—It has been
 " said that since the publication of the speech
 " of my right honourable friend (Mr. Dun-
 " das) every body believes that the Charter
 " will be renewed: and I am glad to hear
 " that such is the case, because it can only
 " arise from a public conviction, that the
 " renewal of the Charter, upon the terms
 " and upon the regulations on which the
 " East-India Company have agreed to accept
 " it, will be much for the interest of this
 " country in every point of view.

Mr. Pitt, on the 21st May, 1793, pro-
 ceeded to examine the observations made
 by Mr. Fox upon the Commercial and poli-
 tical arrangements in the Bill. He (Mr. P.)
 had had recourse to the common platt topic,
 that a free trade was preferable to a monopoly.

insisting that the House ought not to forget this principle, unless very good reasons should be given for adopting a contrary one. *This speculation*, Mr. Pitt said, *had been repeated a thousand times by much less ingenious men than the right hon. member, and scarcely could have been expected to have been resorted to, as the force of it had been done away by his right hon. friend (Mr. Dundas) when he first opened the subject, bottoming his argument, not on vague speculation but on inferences drawn from history, and from authenticated accounts.* Here Mr. Pitt asked *whether the claims of the manufacturers had not been listened to and provided for, and whether the exclusive privilege of the Company had not been rendered subservient to the resources of the Empire?*

Lord GLENVILLE in the House of Lords on the 3d June, 1793, said that if it were necessary for him to enter at large into any general detail on the subject of our possessions in India, or any speculative discussion with respect to the mode in which India

ought to be governed, and in which the trade of that country ought to be carried on, it would open a very wide and extensive field indeed; but, in the present case, it did not appear to him that this was in any shape necessary, because he felt that the ground he had to go on was very much narrowed, by having a just and well-founded experience as a guide; a guide which was at all times perhaps the best, but more particularly so under such circumstances as existed at present. *Nine years experience had proved the benefit of the present system and there appeared therefore no just reason why it should be altered.* The present bill of course assumed for its principle the continuance of that system; but as ideas had been entertained by some, that in the hands of the East-India Company, the trade to India was confined within narrower limits than would be the case were it open to be engaged in by the whole capital and the whole spirit of enterprise of this country; provisions were now, for the first time, introduced into the present bill, which would give an opportunity for

trying the experiment, by allowing merchants and traders to adventure on their own bottom under certain NECESSARY regulations.

SIR PHILIP FRANÇOIS, in April, 1793, said in the House of Commons: " With respect
 " to the Renewal of the Company's exclusive Charter to trade to India; I have already said, *that I do not object to it.....*
 " *I very much question the possibility of increasing our exports to India to any material*
 " *amount, I mean with a rational security of*
 " *finding a profitable vent for them. Except*
 " *military stores, ammunition, and other im-*
 " *plements of war, with which it is not your*
 " *true policy to furnish the Indian princes,*
 " *the manufactures of England can hardly be*
 " *said to be saleable in India beyond the*
 " *trifling amount necessary for the consumption of Europeans.*"

LORENZO MELVILLE, in the House of Commons, in April, 1793, stated, as his full conviction, after mature consideration, that if the Indian Patronage should be vested and concentrated

immediately in the Crown, the weight of it would be too great in the balance of our Government, and might prove dangerous to the Constitution *

LORD MELVILLE, in his Letter to the Chairman of the East India Company, dated the 2d of April, 1800, says—“That the ostensible
 “ form of Government with all its consequent
 “ extent and detail of patronage, must remain
 “ as it is, I am persuaded will never be called
 “ in question by any but those who may be
 “ disposed to sacrifice the freedom and security
 “ of our Constitution to their own personal
 “ aggrandizement and ill-directed ambition.
 “ I remain equally satisfied as to the propriety
 “ of continuing a monopoly of the
 “ trade in the hands of the East India Company.
 “ Those who maintain the reverse,
 “ appear to me, to be misled by general theory,
 “ without attending to the peculiar circumstances
 “ of the trade they are speaking of.

* In this opinion Mr. Pitt perfectly agreed.

See Debate 24th May, 1792.

“ The great interest to be attended to on
 “ the part of the Company, is, *that no goods*
 “ *come from India that are not deposited in*
 “ *the Company's Warehouses, and that the*
 “ *goods so imported are disposed of at the*
 “ *Company's Sales, agreeably to the rules*
 “ *prescribed for that purpose.*”

Lord MELVILLE, in his Letter to
 , dated the 21st March, 1801, says,
 “ THE PRESERVATION OF THE MONOPOLY OF THE
 “ EAST INDIA COMPANY IS ESSENTIALLY REQUI-
 “ SITE FOR THE SECURITY OF EVERY IMPORTANT
 “ INTEREST CONNECTED WITH OUR INDIAN EM-
 “ PIRE : AND SO DEEPLY AM I IMPRESSED WITH
 “ THE TRUTH OF THIS PROPOSITION, THAT I AM
 “ PREPARED EXPLICITLY TO DECLARE, THAT AL-
 “ THOUGH THE FIRST FORMATION OF AN EAST
 “ INDIA COMPANY PROCEEDED FROM PURELY
 “ COMMERCIAL CONSIDERATIONS, THE MAGNITUDE
 “ AND IMPORTANCE TO WHICH THE EAST INDIA
 “ COMPANY HAS PROGRESSIVELY ADVANCED, IS
 “ NOW SO INTERWOVEN WITH THE POLITICAL
 “ INTERESTS OF THE EMPIRE, AS TO CREATE UPON
 “ MY MIND A FIRM CONVICTION *that the main-*

“tenance of the monopoly of the East India
 “Company, is even more important to the po-
 “litical interests of the State, than it is to the
 “commercial interests of the Company.”

My Lord Castlereagh's opinion in the de-
 bate on the Indian Budget, 18th July, 1806,
 was as follows: “It seemed, however, unjust
 “to describe the Company's commerce as car-
 “ried on at a loss. To what precise extent it
 “might be profitable, after providing a liberal
 “dividend to the proprietors, might be a matter
 “of more difficult calculation, and must, like
 “all commercial results, be in its nature fluc-
 “tuating. But, in reasoning upon this branch
 “of the Company's affairs, the worthy Alder-
 “man, (Mr. Prinsep) must establish several
 “preliminary facts, before he can expect to
 “persuade Parliament that the commercial
 “existence of the Company is to be considered
 “merely on grounds of mercantile profit. He
 “must be prepared to shew that individuals
 “would be as likely to carry on steadily the
 “commerce of India, under all the fluctuations
 “to which such trade is liable, where the

" outgoings are great, and the returns distant,
 " as a great trading Corporation. He must
 " be prepared to dispel the apprehensions which
 " must be entertained with respect to the inju-
 " rious influence on the prosperity of India,
 " which may be the consequence of an unsteady
 " and unequal demand for their produce, be-
 " fore he can expect to satisfy Parliament that
 " an intercourse, perfectly unrestrained, is pre-
 " ferable to that qualified intercourse, partly
 " free and partly restricted, which now pre-
 " vails. " If he assumes, that individuals by
 " using an inferior description of tonnage,
 " could carry on the trade at less expense; and
 " consequently at greater profit, he must be
 " prepared to shew, that this is not merely by
 " throwing the difference of the expense on the
 " public, by rendering numerous and expensive
 " convoys requisite to protect their feeble ves-
 " sels in time of war, whilst the Company's
 " ships, with a comparatively slight aid from
 " our navy, are competent to protect each
 " other, and to set the enemy's ships of war,
 " even when in considerable force, at defiance.
 " He must be prepared to shew, that such an

" establishment as that of the Company, could
 " be kept up without the protection of a quali-
 " fied monopoly ; or that such a system is in
 " itself unnecessary to the political existence
 " of the Company, and the management of
 " large territorial revenues, when both in peace
 " and in war funds must be transferred through
 " the medium of commerce from India to
 " Europe, and from Europe to India. He
 " must also shew, before he can establish that
 " the interest of the manufacturer at home is
 " interested in such a change, that individual
 " speculators would be disposed to send out
 " British manufactures, even at some loss, as
 " the Company have frequently done, or that
 " there is any other limit to the amount of this
 " description of Export, on the part of the
 " Company, than the utmost quantity the
 " Indian market can take off, which they
 " have not hitherto been able, with their most
 " strenuous efforts and some sacrifices, to
 " carry beyond £2,000,000 a year. These
 " and many other important doubts must be
 " solved, before any satisfactory or sound con-
 " elusion can be come to, on the great practical

“question (*Private Trade*), to which the worthy Alderman, somewhat out of time, had been solicitous to point the attention of the Committee.”

The authorities here mentioned, my Lord, go directly to state that the Trade and Government of India are interwoven, and ought not to be separated: and the Select Committee of the House of Commons on Indian Affairs, in July, 1812, reports as follows, viz.

The Committee, after declaring that they felt it a part of their duty to offer some account of the nature and history of the extensive establishments for the internal administration of India, “trust that such an account will be acceptable to the House, not only as shewing the importance and utility of the establishments themselves, to the welfare and order of the country, but as evincing the unremitting anxiety that has influenced the efforts of those to whom the government of our Indian possessions has been consigned, to establish a

“ system of administration best calculated to
 “ promote the confidence, and conciliate the
 “ feelings of the native inhabitants, not less by
 “ a respect for their own institutions, than by
 “ the endeavour gradually to engraft upon
 “ them, such improvements, as might shield,
 “ under the safeguard of equal laws, every
 “ class of the people from the oppressions of
 “ power, and communicate to them that sense
 “ of protection and assurance of justice, which
 “ is the efficient spring of all public prosperity
 “ and happiness.”

Is it possible for opinions to be expressed,
 more decidedly, and in language less am-
 biguous than those here quoted? They are
 such opinions, my Lord, as I trust will bear
 the Company out in the firm stand which
 they are obliged to make in defence of their
 liberties and interest, as well as those of
 their country.

My Lord, you have a duty to perform of
 no common nature; you have to stem the

torrent of popular clamor, which increases in proportion as its exorbitant demands are opposed; you have a duty to perform to your country, which is paramount to any other consideration. It is utterly impossible, my Lord, that any man deliberating calmly on the subject can form an erroneous opinion: it is not a temporary relief to His Majesty's Treasury that can justify an acquiescence in an ill-founded demand: common reason forbids us to renounce a real and practicable good, in favour of a theoretical advantage; so must a sense of duty command your Lordship, ~~not~~ to leave the interest of those who have an equal well-founded claim to the protection of the Legislature, and on whom the employment and subsistence of thousands, and the existence of millions depend, to the uncertain issue of SPECULATION and EXPERIMENT.

The character of the Natives of India requires the most delicate attention, and no feature in them is so strong as their attach-

ment to their established opinions. It has been truly observed by a venerable Governor of India, "the touch of chance, or the breath of opinion, might dissolve the British power in India."

Would not the Natives of India, in the event of the annihilation of the Company's power, look upon them as the actors of a day, instead of continuing to feel towards them that respect which they at present entertain. It could not be explained to them, nor could they comprehend how a conqueror could experience the vicissitude of being reduced to nothing, by a mandate from a foreign land; they would conceive the power which had sent such a mandate equally fleeting and dissolving in its character.

I must request your Lordship will permit me to offer you my most sincere apology for the liberty I have taken in thus addressing you; and I do assure your Lordship, I should

have congratulated my country had you not been placed in that situation which has made it necessary for me to trespass so long on your Lordship's valuable time.

LONDON,

9th February, 1813.

OPINIONS
OF
THE LATE LORD MELVILLE
AND
MARQUIS WELLESLEY
UPON
An Open Trade to India.

L O N D O N :

Printed by E. Cox and Son, Great Queen Street,
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1813.

OPINIONS
OF
THE LATE LORD MELVILLE
AND
MARQUIS WELLESLEY,
UPON
AN OPEN TRADE TO INDIA.

EXTRACT *from* LORD MELVILLE'S *Letter to the*
COURT OF DIRECTORS, *dated the 2d April*
1800.

IN the first place, I set out with disclaiming being a party to those opinions, which rest upon any general attack of the monopoly of the East-India Company, either as to the government or commerce of India. My sentiments, in that respect, remain exactly the same as they were when I moved the renewal of the Charter, in 1793; and, if any thing, I am still more confirmed in the principles I brought forward at that time. That a direct interference by Government in the affairs of India is necessary for

their stability and uniformity, I am more and more convinced; but that the ostensible form of government, with all its consequent extent and detail of patronage, must remain as it now is, I am persuaded will never be called in question by any, but those who may be disposed to sacrifice the freedom and security of our Constitution, to their own personal aggrandizement and ill-directed ambition; I remain equally satisfied, as to the propriety of continuing a monopoly of the trade in the hands of the East-India Company. Those who maintain the reverse, appear to me to be misled by general theories, without attending to the peculiar circumstances of the trade they are treating of. Viewing it, even as a mere commercial question, I believe this proposition to be a sound one; and if the trade were laid open, the supposed advantages thence arising are at best very problematical, and would certainly be very precarious and short lived. It is, however, totally to forget the question, to treat it as a mere commercial one. The same principles which prove the necessity of the present form and

mode of Indian government, evince the necessity of the monopoly of trade. The Government and the trade are interwoven together, and we have only to recur to a very recent experience, to learn the immense advantages which have flowed from that connection of Government and trade. By the commercial capital of the Company at home, acting in connection with the public revenues under their administration abroad, they have mutually aided and administered to the wants of each other, and the result has been, the fortunate achievement of those brilliant events, upon the success of which depended the existence of the Government, the territorial wealth, and the trade of India.

If it be true, that the trade to be carried on by the East-India Company must, of necessity, be limited by the extent of their capital, the natural question is,—what is to become of the remainder of it? Is it to be left exclusively to foreign nations, or is the monopoly of the Company to be so modified in the exercise of it, as to open this surplus market to the capital of

British subjects? This is a mere question of policy, to be decided on principles of expediency and sound discretion, upon a due attention to all the considerations which enter into the discussion of it. And although nothing could be more invidious and impolitic, than to attempt to apply the principles of colonial exclusion to other independent nations, nothing certainly can be more just or natural, than that those nations who trade to India, should trade there on their own capitals; and that the capital of the British subjects, resident in India, should be brought home to this country, in the manner most beneficial to their own interests and to that of the mother country, where it is desirable all that capital should ultimately settle. This proposition, then, clearly points out the true appropriation of the surplus produce of India. When I state this, I am, at the same time, free to declare, that I totally disapprove of attempting to accomplish this by penal restrictive statutes. All such ever have been, and ever will be, nugatory, when resorted to for such a purpose. Trade never can be regulated or directed by any other

OPEN, TRADE TO INDIA.

certain rule than the interest of those concerned in it. But it is so much the interest and natural bent of a British subject to send his fortune to that country which gave him birth, and where he means to close his days, that nothing but the most unnatural and impolitic restraints can suggest to him a desire to do otherwise.

But, obvious as this principle may appear to be, it requires accurate attention, in the application of it to the subject in question. If I am asked, whether, in stating this principle, I mean that the trade to and from India, in the common use of the terms, ought to be free and open to all His Majesty's subjects in India? I answer distinctly in the negative. The nature of the Indian manufacture, and the immemorial habits of the manufacturers, exclude the practical application of so indefinite a principle to the export trade from India. The manufacture of the finer and more valuable fabrics of India have always been produced by advances from the Government, on individuals, from whose behoof those fabrics are manufactured; and if the dealing with those manu-

facturers was to be laid open to the uncontrolled competition of every individual, the consequence would be a boundless scene of confusion and fraud, and ultimately, the ruin of the manufacturers themselves. It is unnecessary for me to detail this part of the subject at any length, because it is so clearly and ably explained in a letter from Lord Cornwallis to the Court of Directors, dated the 1st November 1788.

It is immediately connected with the observations last offered, to consider, by what agency is the trade of individuals in India to be carried on? But from what I have already stated on the former point, you will anticipate my opinion on this; namely, that no agent should be employed in India, or permitted to reside there, except with the licence of the East-India Company, and subject to the control of such regulations as the habits, prejudices, and trade of the country may render expedient. In addition to every other consideration, arising out of the peculiar nature of the trade and manners of the country, there is one decisive circumstance against the tolerance of every un-

licensed adventurer in India. It would rapidly, though insensibly, lead to the settlement and colonization of the worst kind of adventurers taking a root in that country, than which there could not be a more fatal blow to the permanency of the British power and pre-eminence in India. No principle ought ever to be tolerated or acted upon, that does not proceed on the basis of India being considered as the temporary residence of a great British Establishment, for the good government of the country, upon steady and uniform principles, and of a large British factory, for the beneficial management of its trade, upon rules applicable to the state and manners of the country.

From these premises the conclusion I draw is, that the surplus produce of India, beyond what the appropriated capital of the East-India Company can bring home, should be considered as the means of transferring the fortunes of the servants in India to Great-Britain; and that the commerce should be managed there, either by the parties themselves interested in it, or by their agents, acting under the license, and sub-

ject to the controul and regulations of the East-India Company.

The question which naturally follows is,—by what mode of conveyance is that trade to be brought home? I answer, by the India-built shipping.

In some of the many speculations I have heard, and the publications I have perused on this subject, it is usual to ask, in a tone of complaint, if it is not unjust and unfair, that the merchants and shipping of this country, other than the shipping of the East-India Company, should be excluded from a participation of that trade, which is allowed to the subjects of foreign nations?

The statement, at first sight, may appear plausible; but when examined to the bottom, it has no solidity. In truth, it is only another mode of objecting to the monopoly of the East-India Company. If there are reasons of sound policy, why the Legislature has decided that the Indian trade should be carried on by a monopoly, it is because, viewing the interests of the Public as one aggregate, it is of opinion, that

those interests are best cared for by that mode of conducting the trade. Those, therefore, who state this objection, being themselves part of that whole, are, in common with the rest of his Majesty's subjects, reaping the benefit of that influx of national wealth and capital, which the East-India trade, so conducted, brings into the national stock. They cannot, therefore, more than others, because their occupation happens to be that of merchants or ship owners, complain of being injured by the means which the wisdom of Parliament has devised, for introducing that flow of wealth into the kingdom.

The case is totally different with regard to the subjects of foreign nations. They are not the objects of the care of the British Legislature; neither are their interests, at all, in the view of its provisions. They reap no benefit, but the reverse, from the growing wealth and prosperity of the British Empire; and therefore are, in no respect, on a footing of comparison with any of the subjects of this country, to whom the restraints of the Company's Charter, for the reasons already assigned, do with perfect propriety

apply. Another turn is given to this objection, in the mouth of the same objecters ; and it is asked,—why, at least, should not the Merchants and Ship-owners, subjects of his Majesty, resident in Britain, have the same indulgences which are contended for by his Majesty's subjects, resident in India? The answer is plain and conclusive,—that in contending for this indulgence to the British subjects resident in India, I am contending for a material national interest, which is no other than this, that their fortunes, capitals created in India, should be transferred from that country to this, in a manner most beneficial for themselves and the kingdom at large, in place of being transferred, through the medium of commerce, by foreigners, and thereby adding to the wealth, capital, and navigation, of foreign countries.

It might be proved, if necessary, that the only effect of giving such an indulgence to the merchants resident in this country, would be a temptation to withdraw a part of the capital of the country from a more profitable trade, and more beneficial application of it, in order to di-

vert it to another trade, less profitable to themselves and less beneficial to the public. Without, therefore, one single reason, either of private justice or public policy, it would be introducing a rival capital in India against the remittance trade of the East-India Company, and in competition likewise with those individuals, whose capitals, by the proposed indulgence, it is wished to transfer to Great-Britain.

The export trade to India can never be extended, in any degree proportionate to the wealth and population of the Indian Empire; neither can the returns upon it be very profitable to individuals. Those who attend to the manners, the manufactures, the food, the raiment, the moral and religious prejudices of that country, can be at no loss to trace the causes, why this proposition must be a true one. The importance of that immense Empire to this country, is rather to be estimated by the great annual addition it makes to the wealth and capital of the kingdom, than by any eminent advantages which the manufactures of the country can derive from the consumption of the natives of

India. I do not mean to say, that the exports from this country to India have not been very considerably increased of late years; and I make no doubt, that, from recent circumstances, they may be still considerably increased. But the prospect, from the causes I have already referred to, must always be a limited one; and I am positive, that the shipping and exertions of the East-India Company, joined to the returned cargoes of those ships who bring home the private-trade of India, is more than adequate to any present or future increase of export trade, that this country can look to upon any rational ground of hope.

**EXTRACT of a Letter from MARQUIS WELLESLEY
to the COURT OF DIRECTORS, dated Fort
William, the 30th September 1800.**

(Par. 45.) THE interests of the Company and of the British Nation are undivided and inseparable, with relation to this important question. Every principle of justice and policy demands the extension of the utmost practicable facility to the British merchants in India, for the export from India to the port of London of the largest possible proportion of the manufactures and produce of India, not required for the Company's investment. Such advantageous terms of freight, and such other benefits should be *open* to the British merchants in India, as should not only remove every inducement to conduct the trade through foreign channels, but should enable the British merchants in India to enter into a competition, in the markets of Europe, with merchants trading in goods of

similar produce or manufacture, provided by foreign capital.

To foreigners the indulgence may safely be extended, of purchasing, with their own capital, such part of the manufactures or produce of India, calculated for the European or American markets, as may not be embraced by the capital employed in the purchase of the Company's investment, and of the cargoes of the British merchants resident in India.

Were the British merchants in India permitted to provide their own tonnage, as occasion might require, every reason exists to justify a belief, that they would soon possess themselves of nearly the whole of the private export trade from India to Europe, and would render London the universal mart for the manufactures and produce of Asia.

If the capital of the merchants in India, and the remittance of the fortunes of individuals, should not supply funds sufficient for the conduct of the whole private export trade from India to Europe, no dangerous consequences could result from applying to this branch of commerce, ca-

pital drawn directly from the British Empire in Europe.

Beneficial consequences, of the utmost importance, would certainly result to the British Empire in India, from any considerable increase of its active capital, which is known not to bear a just proportion to the productive powers of the country.

The necessary effect of such an increase of active capital in India, would be to augment the produce and manufactures of your dominions to the full extent of any possible demand. The high rate of interest on money applied to mercantile purposes, and the charge of the public debt, would be consequently diminished in India; while every source, both of public and private credit, would be proportionably improved. No possibility appears of any injurious consequences resulting to the British Empire in Europe, from an event so advantageous to India. It cannot be supposed, that the private trade of India will ever absorb any portion of British capital, which can find more advantageous employment at home.

If any portion of British capital be now employed in the American, or Portuguese, or Danish trade with India, the general interests of Great-Britain will unquestionably be promoted, by inviting, under increased advantages, the application of the same funds to the trade of the private British merchants, resident within the Company's dominions.

From whatever source the capital of the private British trade in India might be derived, the goods would be obtained in India, under the same wise, humane, and salutary regulations, now enforced, with respect to the provision of every article of produce or manufacture in this country, either by the Company or by the private merchants. Great-Britain would enjoy all the advantages of that trade, which is now a source of wealth and strength to foreign nations, and which tends ultimately to introduce foreign intrigue, to establish foreign influence, and to aggrandize foreign power in India.

It would be equally unjust and unpolitic, to extend any facility to the trade of the British

Merchants in India, by sacrificing or hazarding the Company's rights or privileges, by injuring its commercial interests, by admitting an indiscriminate and unrestrained commercial intercourse between England and India, or by departing from any of the fundamental principles of policy, which now govern the British Establishments in India. The long establishment of the Company's factories in India, the skill of its servants regularly educated for the conduct of those factories, the habitual confidence of the manufacturers in the good faith and integrity of the Company, have secured to the Company so decided a superiority in the provision of the most valuable articles of piece goods and raw-silk, that no private merchant, by any practicable reduction of freight, can be enabled to rival the Company in those important articles of its investment.

The plan contained in the advertisement of the 5th of October 1798, affords to the merchants every necessary facility for the conduct of the private-trade from India to England, while the important principles of the trade and

government of India are preserved from hazard, and sufficient precautions are provided against all the dangers justly apprehended from an unrestricted commercial intercourse between England and India.

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CONSEQUENCES
OF
LAYING OPEN THE TRADE
TO
INDIA, &c.

J. G. Barnard, 57, Skinner Street, London.

VIEW
OF THE
CONSEQUENCES
OF
LAYING OPEN THE TRADE
TO
India,
TO
PRIVATE SHIPS;
WITH
SOME REMARKS
ON THE
Nature of the East India Company's Rights
TO THEIR
Territories,
AND
TRADE DEPENDING UPON THEM;
AND ON THE
CONDUCT AND ISSUE OF THE LATE NEGOCIATION
FOR A
Renewal of their Exclusive Privileges.

BY CHARLES MACLEAN, M. D.

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR J. MAWMAN, 39, LUDGATE STREET.
1813.

PREFACE.



THE question, now at issue, between his Majesty's Ministers and the East India Company, which forms the subject of the following pages, is one of the greatest importance to the British Empire, that can possibly be agitated, in the present state of the world. It is a question, in the discussion of which too many minds cannot be occupied, or too many pens employed.

The serious, and to many the unexpected turn, which the negotiation for the renewal of the East India Company's Charter has recently taken, must have been sufficient to rouse and to alarm every reflecting mind, capable of appreciating the importance of the connection between Asia and Britain.

In common with others, who have feelings and affections connected with India, my mind has been deeply impressed with the mischievous, or rather, I should say, the ruinous tendency of the measures contemplated, and now, apparently, determined on, by his Majesty's Ministers. Regarding the matters in dispute, as by no means of a commercial nature; but rather of a mixed character, principally compounded of considerations of justice, policy, and expediency, upon which all men of common observation, and some knowledge of Indian affairs, may form a correct judgment; I have, upon this ground, and presuming upon the experience acquired in the course of several voyages to India, and of some residence there, ventured to arrange my thoughts on the subject, and to submit them to the public.

From the terms of the last official documents, which have transpired, it is difficult to consider the negotiation, between Ministers and the East India Company, otherwise than terminated; or that the contending parties have not finally taken their respective stands. Lord Buckinghamshire, in his Letter of December the 24th, 1812, has unequivocally announced the determination of his

Majesty's Ministers to persevere in the obnoxious measure of laying Open the Trade to India, to the Out-ports of this Kingdom:—"It is for the Court of Proprietors to decide, whether their own interests, as well as those of the numerous persons depending upon them, both at home and abroad, can best be preserved by their rejection of, or acquiescence in, those conditions, upon which alone, consistent with their public duty, his Majesty's Government can submit a proposition to Parliament, for the renewal of the Charter."*

In their reply, dated the 30th December, the Chairmen of the Court of Directors repeat in the following terms their determination, already so frequently declared, to maintain the rights of their Constituents: "But prepared as we shall be, if forced into this situation, to maintain the rights and claims of our Constituents, we must yet express our hope, that the Company will not be reduced to the hard alternative, of thus having to contend for all that is dear to them, or to accept a charter, on terms which will not enable them to execute the

* *Vide Papers respecting a negotiation for a renewal of the East India Company's exclusive privileges, p. 173.*

particular to assigned to them in the Indian system." * To this affirmation, Lord Buckinghamshire, in a letter, certainly the most extraordinary that has appeared in the course of this negotiation, and which will not probably escape becoming the subject of numerous animadversions, replies, that " it will be for Parliament to determine, whether the nation is, in this respect (the existence of the present Indian system,) without an alternative; or whether, if a change of system should be rendered necessary by the decision of the East India Company, measures might not be taken for opening the trade, and at the same time providing such an administration of the Government of India as might be found compatible with the interests and security of the British Constitution." † His Lordship has not thought fit

* *Vide Papers respecting the negotiation for a renewal of the East India Company's exclusive privileges*, p. 179.

† *Vide Lord Buckinghamshire's Letter*, dated January 4, 1813. *Ibid.* p. 183.—In the paragraph preceding the last, he says, " If the Government of India cannot be carried on with safety to the Constitution, except through the intervention of the Company, the propositions of the Court of Directors, whatever they may be, must unconditionally be admitted." This is very far from being, even generally, a correct inference. No person

to explain by what measures this compatibility might be effected, any more than he has the grounds on which Ministers have chosen to persist in their determination of opening the Trade to India to the Out-ports. The pompous proposition, on which they seem to lean with so much confidence and complacency, that "the Merchants of this country have a substantial claim to as much liberty of trade as they can enjoy, *without injury to other important national interests,*" can here have no meaning; since the *quantum* of that liberty, which may be extended to them on this ground, is precisely the question at issue. It has been demonstratively shewn by the Court of Directors, and certainly they are in this case a much more competent authority than any of their opponents, not even excepting his Majesty's Ministers, that the Merchants of this country already enjoy as much of that liberty, as is compatible with the other important national interests concerned. And do these Ministers apprehend that

sition of the Directors, that is not founded in strict justice, liberal policy, and constitutional principles, need be admitted by the legislature. On the present occasion, if they have erred, it has been in conceding too much to a Minister who seemed determined to continue rising unreasonably in their demands.

justice to the East India Company, the preservation of the rights and privileges belonging to them, on the inviolability of their property, do not form a part, and a very essential part of "those " important national interests?" If they do entertain such sentiments, it is high time that they should be undeceived.

It has been rendered evident to the meanest capacity that an extension of the liberty of trade to India, such as is now contended for, is not only incompatible with the best interests of the British Empire; but that it would prove the immediate ruin of those individuals, who are most vociferous in its favour. Consequently, could it for a moment be believed that the gratification of those petitioners was the real motive, which induced His Majesty's ministers to persist in the measure of laying open the trade to India from the out-ports, they would resemble the india-foot nurse, who, in order to appease a froward child, should put into its hands some sharp, or pointed instrument, of which the first use it should make might be to wound itself. But this, I think, would be underrating their abilities. To have expected that the East India Company should be so considerate to their rights, or possess so

little firmness, as, without an equivalent, and without a struggle, to surrender what they consider the key to all their privileges, would be to argue a greater want of penetration in His Majesty's ministers, than can perhaps be fairly imputed to them. It seems much more probable that they had anticipated, and were desirous of producing, the result, which has actually happened, with the view of creating a pretext for transferring to themselves the whole power and patronage of India, and by these means of retaining their ministerial situations for life!

This transfer, to the crown, of the power and patronage, incident to the government of sixty millions of the inhabitants of Asia, which could not fail to enable its servants more commodiously to rule sixteen millions of British-born subjects at home, appears to be the grand measure, by which the ministers of the Prince Regent* propose to effect a

* It is somewhat remarkable, that Lord Buckinghamshire, although he generally designates himself and his colleagues, "*His Majesty's government*," whenever he means to lay peculiarly hard upon the East India Company, calls them "*Ministers of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent*." See his Letter of the 4th Jan. 1813, published in the *Papers* respecting the Negotiation for the renewal of the East India Company's exclusive Privileges, p. 182.

changes in the East Indian system, "rendered necessary," they say, "by the decision of the East India Company," that shall be "compatible with the interests and security of the British Constitution!"

But parliament, it cannot be doubted, when this great question comes before them, will take an enlarged and unbiassed view of all the grand national interests involved in the controversy. They will not, to gratify the blind or criminal ambition of any set of ministers, suffer the East India Company to be despoiled of their property, the Crown of its revenue, the people of a necessary of life, and the nation of its freedom.

22, Hatton Garden, 11
11, January, 1813.

CONSEQUENCES
OF
LAYING OPEN THE TRADE
TO
INDIA, &c.

F^c**ROM** the establishment of the East India Company, as territorial sovereigns in Asia, it has been the usual practice, previous to the introduction of a Bill into Parliament, for the further extension of the term of their exclusive privileges, that the conditions upon which their Charter was to be renewed, and the principles upon which the Indian empire was to be governed, should be made the subject of arrangement between the Ministers of the Crown, on the part of the Public, and the Court of Directors, on the part of the East India Company. And these arrangements have generally undergone but few, or unimportant modifications, in receiving the sanction of the Legislature.

By the great extension of territory, and increase of trade, which have been progressively effected, under the judicious management of the Company,

these negotiations have, at each successive renewal, acquired additional importance. Since the Bill of 1703, the population, the territory, and the commerce, under their jurisdiction, have been more than doubled: and the civil and military establishments of their vast dominions, as well as the ties between them and the mother country, have been augmented in the same ratio. When to these is added the immense trade carried on by the Company with the empire of China, they form altogether the grandest and most stupendous, and it may truly be said, the most singular, political, and commercial edifice the world ever saw. In this now splendid state, it is not only the brightest jewel in the British Crown, but the fairest portion of the British empire. How, then, are we to characterize a measure, which must obviously destroy the unity of the approved system, by which our Asiatic possessions and commerce have, in that period, risen to such prosperity and splendour? By impartial men, and men of experience, it will be viewed as an unjustifiable experiment on the integrity and safety of the British empire;—an experiment made too at a season of peculiar political peril; and risked (if the avowed be the real motive), in mere compliment to unfounded clamours, which do not, even arise from the effluence of popular discontent, but have been excited with much art and industry, by the unalloyed selfishness of some commercial and manufacturing bodies.

Under these circumstances, it may be considered most fortunate, for the nation, for the East India Company, and more especially for those who were most active in petitioning Parliament for an unrestrained intercourse with India, that the renewal of the Company's Charter did not come under discussion last year; but that a measure so highly important to the best interests of the State has been delayed, until the delusive expectations, which had been excited, and the erroneous conclusions which had been formed, should have time to subside, or be rectified by a perusal of the very able official correspondence, which has taken place between the Court of Directors and his Majesty's Ministers on the subject.

At the various periods of the renewal of the term of the Company's exclusive privileges, and before the system of East Indian government had attained its present almost perfect form, many speculative notions were afloat, respecting the sort of constitution which would best suit our Indian territories, consistently with the spirit and preservation of our own. Various plans were of course projected. Some were for depriving the Company of the territories, and leaving them in exclusive possession of the trade; others for depriving them of the trade, and leaving them in possession of the territories. It does not, however, appear, that, since the establishment of the present Indian system (by the Acts of 1784 and 1793), either of these ideas have been entertained.

have either egregiously mistaken, or, affected to misstate, the real nature of the question. They have all regarded or affected to regard the trade to India as a monopoly, which, as shall be presently shewn, is very contrary to the true state of the case. Some of them have represented it as a losing trade; and, with sufficient inconsistency, have accused the East India Company of selfishness, in seeking to preserve a losing trade. With a still higher degree of inconsistency, they have manifested the most eager desire to participate in this "losing trade;" as if presuming themselves capable, as individuals, with capital and other advantages so greatly inferior to the Company, of converting it into a profitable one. While, indeed, they affect grounds of public utility, they shew, by the whole tenor of their reasoning, that in seeking to invade the privileges of the East India Company, they have no other view than the fallacious one, in this case, of private gain. It was necessary to their object to represent the interests of the public, and of the East India Company, as at variance, and utterly irreconcilable; and their own interests as identified with those of the public. It also happened that, in the comparatively stagnant state of commerce and manufactures last year, the persons most immediately suffering under these evils, like drowning men grasping at straws, were led to hail the era of the termination of the Company's exclusive privileges, and of the establishment of an Open Trade to India, as that of

the termination of their own misfortunes. In considering an open trade, and an increased consumption of British Commodities in India, as synonymous terms, they all seemed to concur. Ignorant of the character of the inhabitants of Asia, they regarded the regulated trade of the Company, as that which alone prevented this increase of consumption. They branded it with the name of Monopoly; and armed with the authority of Dr. Adam Smith, they declared *all* monopolies to be mischievous, and, with that of Thomas Paine, to be contrary to the imprescriptible rights of man.

The consequences of the admission of these principles would go much farther, than those who have advanced them, to serve particular purposes, could wish. They would go the length of laying open the trade to India to all the world. But we shall limit our reasoning to the boundaries of the British empire. If, upon the principle of universal right, the trade to India be laid open to *some* parts, with what justice can the same privilege be withheld from *other* parts of the British dominions? If it be an inherent right in the Merchants of Bristol, Liverpool, and Glasgow, to trade with India, is it not equally so in the inhabitants of the Orkney and Shetland Islands, of the West Indies and North America?

To argue seriously, or at any length, against these abstract and inapplicable doctrines, East here, I should apprehend, be unnecessary. The East

India Company, however, while they refuse to bow to the authority of such wild and vague hypotheses, have done themselves honour by not narrowing the question, as if it only involved the opposing interests of different bodies of men. The Court of Directors have, on the contrary, throughout their correspondence with Ministers, argued the case as it may be supposed to affect, in every grand view of policy and expediency, the interests of the nation at large; considering their constituents not as an isolated Corporation, but as members of the state, identified, in all their relations, with the great body of the community.

It is a notorious fact that the trade to India, so far from being of the nature of a monopoly, is already as open and unrestrained as is consistent with just and rational views of public utility. The tonnage, which, under the idea of extending the commerce of individuals, has been appropriated to private trade, by the Bill of 1793, is four times greater than has ever been claimed by those for whom it was intended.* Of sixty-three thousand tons allotted for this purpose during the last six years, only sixteen thousand (about one fourth) were filled up; leaving forty-seven thousand tons to be paid for by the Company, on account of the Public.

Here is no monopoly, or impolitic restrictions on

* Vide Papers respecting the negotiation for a renewal of the East India Company's exclusive Privileges, &c. p. 129.

trade. On the contrary, greater facilities are held out to the private Merchant, and that too at a great inconvenience and enormous expence to the Company, than he chooses to avail himself of. If more tonnage than the law allots, had been required for the accommodation of the private trader; the liberal conduct of the Company in other respects evinces that they would have readily granted it.

They did actually, on several occasions, allow to private traders from India several thousand tons more than was allotted by law. The fact, indeed, is that although a certain quantity of tonnage is specified by the act of 1793, for the accommodation of the individual Merchant, it was for the discretion of the Court of Directors to have allowed more, had it been required.

Did they not with the most commendable liberality, offer the County of Cornwall to export annually to China, twelve hundred tons of tin *freight free*;* although, were they only to consult their own convenience, they could supply that market with the same article upon better terms from various parts of India? Have they not, upon a similar principle of accommodation, made an annual sacrifice of £50,000, for the special encouragement of the woollen manufactures of this country?

To call a trade, conducted upon such principles, a monopoly, is equally contrary to reason and to fact.

But, besides allotting more tonnage annually to individual Merchants, than these have been disposed to occupy, the Company have shared, in another way, the fruits of their commerce with the public. The payments which they have, at various periods, made to the state, from 1768 to 1812, amount to £5,135,19; or at the rate of one hundred thousand pounds, and upwards, annually; * to say nothing of the immense revenue arising from their well-regulated trade.

“ It is a solecism, as has been well and truly observed by an eloquent Proprietor of East India Stock, † “ to call that trade a monopoly, which admits the whole country to a partnership in its eventual gains; and which allows any Merchant, or Trader, to export to or import from India, to an extent considerably beyond what has ever been claimed.” That is not a monopoly, of which every person and every association, by purchasing stock, may become members, whose sales are regulated, the prices being left at the pleasure of the buyers; and their amount annually laid before Parliament. The East India Company, in short, is not a private Corporation, trading exclusively; but the British nation, trading under legislative regulations to India.

* Vide Papers, respecting the negotiation, &c. p. 57.

† Mr. Randle Jackson—vide his speech delivered at a General Court of Proprietors, 4th Decr 1812, p. 13.

It will not be supposed, by any man of sense, that the Company would be disposed to make the great sacrifices which have been here alluded to, merely to humour the caprices, or to fall in with the false notions of interest of particular descriptions of men, had they not powerful motives, arising from other sources than those of mere commercial profit, for wishing to retain the exclusive privilege of the navigation to India: for this alone, if I understand the matter right, is what the Company contend for, as essential not only to the security of their China Trade, but to the permanent safety of their Indian Empire. They will, I am persuaded, have no objection to make the further sacrifice of allotting to the use of the private Merchants, as much more tonnage, than was granted by the Act of 1703, as there may arise a demand for. But surely, since this can be shewn to be essential to the safety of their dominions, they have a right to expect that all trade to India should continue to be carried on, in ships, under their immediate controul, or exclusively in their service.

The question, then, as it at present stands, between his Majesty's Ministers and the East India Company, does not respect the exclusive privilege of trade, but the exclusive privilege of navigation; and divides itself into three branches:—

1. The admission of private ships into the trade of India, from the Port of London only.
2. Their admission from the outports.

3. The admission of ships of inferior burthen into the trade.

It was upon the scale, contemplated in the first branch of this proposition, that Lord Melville proposed the alterations in the Indian system of trade should be carried into effect. Even on this comparatively limited scale, as at first intended by his Majesty's Ministers, the measure will appear to be more than sufficiently pregnant with mischief; while the benefits to be expected from it, are, according to the acknowledgment of Lord Melville himself, at least extremely doubtful. But the two ulterior branches, brought forward by the successor of that nobleman, immediately after his retirement from the Board of Controul, are peculiarly well calculated to aggravate and accelerate the evils, which would have been occasioned by the original branch in a smaller and a slower degree.

These evils I propose to consider in the following order; and to shew:—

1. That the establishment of an unlimited intercourse, by Private Ships, with India, would inevitably lead to the colonization of that country; which could not but terminate in its separation from Great Britain.

2. That this intercourse, particularly if carried on from the outports and in ships of small burthen, would be productive of irregularity, smuggling, depredations, and even piracy, in the Indian Seas; that its immediate effect would be materially to

injure the Company's regular trade to China; and that it would endanger the permanency, or occasion the entire interruption of the intercourse with that country, to the utter deprivation of an article, become essential at least to the comforts of the inhabitants of this country, if not an absolute necessary of life.

3. That, at home, the public revenue would suffer an immense loss, and the commodities of India an alarming deterioration, in consequence of the smuggling which would unavoidably ensue, and become with private adventurers a principal occupation, throughout the coasts of the Empire: that this loss would be farther enhanced by the additional expence of collecting the revenue at the outports; and that the public would be disgusted by the legions of Custom House officers, whom it would be necessary to appoint for that purpose.

4. That, in return for so many risks to the safety of both Empires, the public would derive nothing beyond the speculative and delusive prospect of some uncertain and remote benefit; while the individuals, who, in their eagerness to discover a new resource against the pressure arising from the stagnation of commerce, seem disposed to overlook all obstacles, would find in the participation, so much coveted, of the Indian Trade, nothing but disappointment and ruin; it being absolutely incredible, of that extension, which, from a lamentable ignorance of facts, they suppose private industry could effect.

In offering a detailed elucidation of these propositions, I may begin by remarking that the prevention of colonization has always, hitherto, been a great and leading principle in our Asiatic government; and that, unless some new light has recently broke forth to shew us that this grand measure of precaution has been founded in erroneous policy, it would appear to be the part of wisdom to continue in those paths, which have been so securely and prosperously trodden by our predecessors.

The division of the natives of Asia into numerous casts, and the principle of perpetuity which pervades this distinction, if one may so speak, constitute a source of security to the permanence of our East Indian Government, hitherto unparalleled in the history of the world; and, as there is no great probability that mankind will ever again be edified by a similar phenomenon, it is rather a pity that we should be in any particular hurry to adopt measures, which might prematurely destroy it. Here the maxim, so frequently in the mouths of politicians, of "divide and govern," pervades, in a practical shape, the population; and stands consecrated by the hand of time itself. Nor could there be a state of things better calculated to insure the happiness of a people, where, as in this instance, the views of their governors are invariably directed by a liberal, enlightened, and humane policy.

Here the facts completely coincide with the theory; for there is not in the universe a people

more happy, or less burthened, than those natives of Asia, who are under the dominion of the East India Company.

The division of the people of Asia into numerous casts, and the mutual repulsion of these casts, constitute a state of things, of which the influence upon morals, opinions, and government, appears to have been but seldom duly appreciated. To these circumstances, perhaps more than to all others, may be attributed the safety, amidst foreign wars, and intestine commotions, of the British possessions in India. And, while they exist, they will continue in a great measure to obviate the danger, which would instantaneously arise from the active operation of public opinion, when adverse, in so extensive and populous a country. Did the population of Asia resemble that of Europe or America, or indeed of any other portion of the world, it is obvious that the power of the sword would afford but a precarious security to the duration of British supremacy in the East. As it is, I do not see any possible event that can endanger the stability of this power, in so far as it may depend upon these circumstances, but such a mixture of foreign population (which could only arise from the tolerance of colonization), as would weaken, or obliterate these characteristic features of the native inhabitants.

It is true that this principle of perpetuity, or stagnation, if you will, has been regarded as a misfortune, by some very benevolent persons, who, in their

zeal for improvement, have wished to see the natives of India imitate, even in their dress, the natives of Europe. I remember to have heard an anecdote, to this effect, related of a very worthy *puisse* judge, of the supreme court of judicature in Bengal. As the first judges, who were appointed to India, were proceeding by water to Calcutta, perceiving some barefooted natives travelling along the muddy banks of the Ganges: "Brother Chambers," says Mr. Justice Hyde, "I hope, before you and I return to England, to see those poor fellows dressed in buckskin breeches and boots." Sir Robert Chambers, who, with equal benevolence, was a better judge of human nature, only smiled at the simplicity of his worthy colleague.

As on the permanency of this singular and truly characteristic feature, which distinguishes the population of the East, depends, in no inconsiderable degree, the duration of the British power in Asia, if it were practicable to assimilate in character the inhabitants of that country with those of Europe, I should applaud his philanthropy, rather than his wisdom, who should desire to see such an alteration speedily realized. Yet there does not occur to my mind any measure better calculated to produce that effect, unless a premium were offered to colonists, than that which is now in question. It will not, I apprehend, be denied, that in the progress of colonization, those leading traits of the Asiatic character, which tend so powerfully to secure to us their alle-

giance, would be gradually weakened, defaced, and obliterated. Nor can it be doubted that the danger to the existence of the British power in India would be equally certain, whether it should arise indirectly from a change effected in the character of the natives by colonization, or directly from the increasing number of colonists.

Every one conversant in history, knows that it is the common course of distant colonies, whenever they feel a sense of their own strength, to feel also an independence of the mother country, and to acquire the disposition to embrace the first favourable opportunity of throwing off their allegiance. India cannot be supposed to form an exception to this general rule; and I cannot well comprehend how any man, wishing well to both countries, and understanding their true interests, can venture, in the present political state of the world, to recommend the adoption of a measure, which could by possibility lead to their separation.

How far the measure of admitting private ships to the trade of India be of this description, is what we are now to examine. And I think it will appear manifest to the meanest capacity, that colonization, and the other evil consequences, which have been apprehended from it, would, especially on the extended scale recently suggested, be the inevitable results.

The connection between India and Britain, in their commercial, as well as political relations, is

essentially and in its nature different from any that has ever existed between other countries. Consequently, history does not afford us, in our reasoning, either parallel or analogy. With respect to the trade, or rather the navigation, which alone is at present in question, experience has shewn that regulation is as necessary to its well being, as laws are to the maintenance of social order. But this is altogether incompatible with the indiscriminate admission of private ships, in the manner proposed, to the trade of India. The great distance between the two countries; the immense extent of coast, which encircles the British territories in India; the numerous ports and islands, belonging to so many different nations, by which the course of the navigation is interspersed; would afford so many facilities to the deceptions and depredations of the evil disposed; so many temptations to those whose integrity is unconfirmed; and so many chances of eluding detection to those who may have committed crimes, that I should tremble at the result, both in a view of public morals and of public safety, of the gigantic experiment of freeing a commerce so vast and so singular in its nature, from those salutary restraints, under which it has so long increased and flourished. In the present convulsed state of the world, the rashness of such an experiment could only be equalled by its criminality.

The facility with which Ministers have yielded to the solicitations of those mercantile and manu-

facturing bodies, who have, in their dreams, expected to derive incalculable advantages from the trade to India being laid open to private ships, could alone have been founded on an erroneous belief that it is practicable to make regulations, in India and in Europe, which would obviate the dangers that are justly apprehended from that bold and extraordinary measure. But all men of experience on the subject, know that this expectation is utterly absurd. By what code of regulations, indeed, could adequate restraints be imposed on the conduct of persons trading to India, independent of the Company's control, and navigating ships not in their service? Respecting the Code proposed, which is to effect those wonders, we have hitherto derived no information.

Let us trace the probable progress of this new navigation.—A private, independent ship arrives at a port in India. She there discharges the whole, or such part of her cargo as suits her convenience; reloads; and proceeds (if the Eastern Archipelago be comprehended in the space which they are to be allowed to navigate) to some of the islands adjacent to China, to New South Wales, to the South-West Coast of America, to the Cape of Good Hope, or in short to any part of Asia, Africa, Europe, or America; even to France, or the United States, if at peace with this country: for it must be presumed that in the owners or supercargoes of such ships, not in the Company, or their agents, would remain

the right of directing their ulterior destinations. Let us suppose, what would very frequently happen, that the commanders, or supercargoes, were also the owners of such ships; and that, instead of embarking for any definite voyage, their view was to avail themselves of such favourable opportunities as might occur, of engaging in profitable adventures, without being very scrupulous about the means. Might not adventurers of this description, after having perpetrated the most flagitious acts, even robbery or piracy, against the natives of India, or other acts of a more public nature, affecting politically the interests of the East India Company, find impunity, or even welcome and protection, by taking refuge in France or America? Might not many such adventurers, under the pretence of commerce, act as agents for, and be regularly employed to convey to India the emissaries of the powers at war with this country, or whose policy in peace is adverse to its prosperity? This, as every one is fully aware of, who knows the nature of man, and the state of India, is not to proclaim ideal or imaginary evils; but to anticipate certain and indubitable results. If there are in this country men base enough to aid French prisoners in escaping from captivity, is it uncharitable to believe that there are others, who would convey the emissaries of that nation to our East India colonies; seeing that the chances of detection and punishment are so much diminished by the distance? What securities could the East India Company, or the na-

tion exact of the owners of ships, not in their service, especially those sailing from the out-ports, which might not easily be eluded? Supposing securities were exacted, even to the full amount of the value of the ship, in case of any misconduct during the voyage, what degree of safety would be found in this measure? In case of detection, the real or ostensible owners might evade the impending storm, by taking shelter in a foreign or hostile port; or they might choose to abide the issue, having insured compensation for the forfeiture, from the individuals or the governments, whose projects their vessels were serving.

These are consequences which ought to be sufficient, independent of the risk of colonization, to alarm men of reasonable and sober calculation. But when we reflect, that every one of these private ships might allow the whole of their British crews to quit them in India, to be replaced by Lascars, or foreign European sailors; or that, their discipline being necessarily inferior to that of the Company's ships, their crews might all abandon them; and that no precautions or restrictions, which it is possible to devise, can prevent these results in part; it must be obvious how rapidly the measure of laying open the Trade to India to private ships would accelerate the progress of colonization.

Nor could this progress be either prevented or impeded, as some have erroneously supposed, by any measures of the local governments, which

would not bear a character of despotism inconsistent with the state of society in that part of our dominions. Persons having made a long voyage by trade (which would be the case with a great many, if private ships were allowed) would be desirous, with the very best intentions, of repairing their losses by a residence in India. Others, having offers of an advantageous settlement, might clandestinely or by connivance quit their ships. Some might be left behind from sickness, and some abandon their situation in disgust. The number of persons who, actuated by one or several of all these various motives, or determined by other circumstances of accident or of choice, would seek to better their condition by remaining in India instead of returning with their ships to Europe, would, it may reasonably be expected, frequently bear a considerable proportion to the whole number of the crew; and having procured themselves an establishment, how could the local governments, while they conducted themselves as quiet, peaceable, and loyal subjects, oblige these persons, without appearing excessively rigorous, or even cruel, to relinquish the establishments which they had obtained, and to return to Europe? We are here supposing the local governments to have the means of ascertaining all persons so circumstanced, a thing evidently impossible, without the introduction of a system of police inconsistent with all ideas of British Government. If it were even practicable, by the

strictest vigilance, to oppose at the commencement some sort of limits to the inundation of emigrants which would thus pour into India, it is evident that these limits could not be long effectual. The present restrictions being removed, the progress of emigration would increase in a geometrical ratio, the inducements to new colonists increasing in that proportion to the number of the old ones.

Of the effects that would result in this respect from laying open the Trade to private ships, some reasonable conjecture may be formed by contemplating the number of Europeans that have settled in India, from the Company's chartered ships, notwithstanding the strict bonds by which these are connected with their employers. In cases of irregularity the Company can withhold from the owners their freight; they can mulct the captains and deprive them of their commands; they can dismiss the officers from their service. But even the great power which the Company thus possess over the owners, captains, and officers of their regular ships has not always been sufficient to prevent their crews from forming a residence in India. How much more feeble then, or rather what a nullity would be their authority over private ships, of which the owners, commanders, and officers would, under the system proposed, be wholly independent of them?

But the emigration to India would by no means be confined to those descriptions of persons who

might casually quit their ships in order to form a residence in that country. There are many circumstances, and among them the flourishing and secure state of the British dominions, which now more than formerly produce a tendency to the colonization of Asia. Those who went with permission, at former periods, to the East Indies, under the denomination of free-mariners, or who casually remained there and settled as merchants or traders, with licenses from the Company, invariably went abroad with the view, after having realized a competency or a fortune, of returning to spend the evening of their days in their native country. Now, however, that fortunes are not so easily acquired, and that the mode of living among Europeans in India is considerably improved, many persons, who would have gone formerly with the intention of returning, will proceed to that country, assured of the stability of the British power, with a design of making it a permanent residence.

Thus the British Empire itself, should this feeling extend, an effect which this measure in contemplation is admirably calculated to produce, might suffer an alarming depopulation: and it is no less reasonably to be expected that, under the existing pressure of war and despotism in other countries, an immense emigration would take place from almost all parts of the world, which would naturally concentrate in India, as being now the most favoured asylum of peace, security, and plenty.

This result could not fail to be farther accelerated by the progress of events in South America, New South Wales, and other countries, which, from their position, would always, if navigation were unrestrained, have a considerable intercourse with the Company's territories: and the additional intercourse, upon the return of peace, of the nations now in hostility with us, would powerfully contribute toward the same end.

Upon the whole, in reviewing this measure in all its bearings, the conclusion which we are obliged to form is, that if the object intended were to encourage emigration to India, a better or a more appropriate plan could scarcely have been devised for that purpose, than that of granting *unlimited* permission to private ships to trade to that country. And how, I would ask, is the permission to be *limited*? If licenses from the Company should be deemed necessary, how can they, without the grossest inconsistency and injustice, be granted to some merchants and to some ship-owners, but refused to others? If they should *not* be deemed necessary, then every person in the kingdom, who has the ability and the fancy to embark in such an undertaking, may fit out a ship for India, and despatch her at whatever period he pleases.

Thus India would be colonized!

With respect to the effect which that result would produce on the permanency of its connection with Great Britain, no man, I should think, will be

hardly enough to deny that it would prove ultimately fatal; and the only difference of opinion, which could reasonably arise, would be respecting the precise period at which their separation would happen.

The next proposition is, that opening the Trade of India to private ships would be productive of irregularity, smuggling, depredations, and even piracy in the Indian Seas; that it would interfere materially with the Company's regular Trade to China, and even endanger the permanency of, or entirely interrupt, the intercourse with that country.

Under the system of Open Trade proposed, there is not a doubt that, in so vast a range of coast many opportunities would occur, in places to which British laws and British protection have not yet fully extended, of plundering, over-reaching, or otherwise mal-treating the mild and inoffensive inhabitants: and, although the natural love of justice would with many prevail over all temptations, yet there are others who would allow themselves to be seduced into acts of violence, treachery, or deception, which the facility of escaping punishment would render too alluring to be always resisted. However we may be advanced in refinement, I am not aware that, in respect to sound morals, the present times are much superior to what they were a century ago; and we know that, at that period, a regular system of piracy was organized by the in-

sealers, who frequented the Indian Seas, to the great inconvenience and loss of the East India Company, and the imprisonment by the native powers, of their most valuable servants*. Some of the piratical vessels, which then infested those seas, were even fitted out by British subjects, from New York and other parts of America, then under our own dominion†. It is true, the present state of India by land, and that of our naval power in the Eastern Seas, would render such projects now much more hazardous. But if, from these circumstances, private adventurers should seldom be daring enough to venture upon absolute piracy, they would still have sufficient temptations and opportunity to commit minor depredations.

The injury which would arise from this source to the Company's China Trade is equally certain, but of much greater importance. It was a judicious precaution of the Court of Directors, with a view to the safety of this trade, to desire that private ships might be prohibited from having access to the Molucca Islands, or Eastern Archipelago. But even this restriction, although undoubtedly some

* *Ibid* Bruce's *Annals of the East India Company*, Vol. III. pp. 204. and 210.

† *Ibid*, pp. 228 and 271.

would apprehend, be but a very slender security against the danger. Private ships would find it profitable to bring home teas. The temptation to smuggle an article, which bears ninety-six per cent. duty *ad valorem*, is too great to be resisted, in the first instance, from the mere apprehension of remote detection and punishment. It is an evil which can only be resisted, *in limine*, by some such system of restriction as that which at present exists. And hence, it may be pronounced, without reserve, that to lay open the East India Trade to private ships would be, in other words, to lay the foundation of an illicit commerce, more extensive, and more injurious in its consequences, than any that has ever existed in the world.

Even were the ships of individuals prohibited from visiting the Molucca Islands, which however His Majesty's Ministers have shewn some reluctance to accord, encouragement would still arise to the exportation of teas and other commodities from China, to answer the demand occasioned by these ships. These commodities would find their way to some central ports in the Indian Seas, which would in such case become large depôts; and thus, from the inordinate profits which would attend each successful voyage, an immense and a regular system of clandestine Trade, would spontaneously spring up. It would not be in human ingenuity to prevent it. Neutral and hostile nations would think it their in-

terest to protect and encourage such a ~~trade~~; and this very circumstance might lay the foundation of new wars.

Whenever peace shall take place between this country and France (and war cannot be eternal), the evils arising from this source may naturally be expected to increase. It would be unreasonable to suppose that, at whatever period that event may happen, we shall be in a situation entirely to dictate the conditions of the peace, or that the enemy will not aspire to the restoration of his Asiatic possessions, at least the islands which we have recently captured, as equivalents for other objects, which he may be disposed to relinquish. In the event, then, of our being obliged to restore the Islands of Mauritius and Bourbon, would they not form very convenient depôts for Clandestine Trade? And, is it not highly probable that, with this very view, they would be declared free ports? Madagascar, Maunilla, and other places not within British jurisdiction, would also naturally become the resorts of such a commerce. We could not, if at peace with these nations, prevent French, American, Spanish, or Portuguese ships from bringing teas from China, for the purpose of lodging them at these depôts; nor the ships of our own private merchants from touching at such ports, in order to purchase those teas with the view of smuggling them into Great Britain, or some intermediate ports.

danger, if it be carried into effect, I am of opinion, that the Bill by which it is to be enacted, ought to be denominated "an act for establishing, protecting, and extending illicit commerce between India and Britain."

It is well known, that enough of tea for the consumption of the whole United Kingdom has always been supplied, in an unadulterated state, and at reasonable prices, by the East India Company; and that from this source has arisen their principal commercial profits.* Let us now enquire what would be the effects upon these profits of admitting private ships to the Trade of India. An increased demand for tea, and a consequent rise in the price of that article, would immediately take place in China; while the competition of illicit Traders, by producing a superabundant supply, would occasion a fall in the price of the same commodity at home. Thus the profits of the Company would be unfavourably affected, by a double operation. The revenue, depending upon this source, it is obvious, would be almost wholly annihilated. And what would the consumer benefit by the change? While the abatement, which it would occasion, on the retail prices, could not be sensibly felt; even by the poorest persons in society, the sophistication, which would

* Twenty-five millions of pounds of various kinds of tea is the average quantity sold at the Company's sales in the year.

in consequence take place, of an article so necessary of life throughout the British dominions, would diminish the comforts, and might injure the health, of almost every member of the community. And thus, from a measure pregnant with danger to so many various interests, it cannot be said that a single incidental benefit is promised to the public.

The Company, crippled as they would, then be, could no longer afford to export to China, as they have been accustomed to do, at an immense loss, to the annual amount of a million sterling of the metals and woollens of Great Britain. And thus, some of our best staple commodities, contrary to the fallacious expectations entertained by many of those who deal in them, would, instead of experiencing an increase, suffer, from the measure proposed, an immediate diminution of sale.

So assured, indeed, were the Proprietors of the Cornwall Mines, of the loss that would arise on the sale of their products in China, if exported on their own accounts, (and the same apprehensions would, of course, be entertained by private Merchants) that they thought proper to decline the liberal offer of the Company, to convey annually twelve hundred tons of their metals to that country, freight free.

The annual sacrifices thus made by the Company at the shrine of the public, particularly in respect to woollens and metals, they were enabled to bear, both by the profits of their homeward

cargoes, and by the mutual support which their territorial revenue, and commerce, afforded to each other. From their mixed character of Sovereigns and Merchants, they were enabled to effect, what it is utterly impossible that individuals, in their mere commercial capacity, should have the power to accomplish.

From all these considerations, it follows, that the plan of granting liberty to Private Ships to trade to India, even if they should be excluded from the Eastern Archipelago, is a certain, although an indirect, mode of depriving the East India Company of all the benefits of the China Trade; and may, eventually, deprive the inhabitants of these Kingdoms of one of the most essential necessities of life;—an article, which scarcely an individual from the throne to the cottage can now dispense with, and which chiefly administers to the subsistence of the very poorest classes of society.

If the Moluccas, indeed, were to be included in the tracts, which Private Ships are to be permitted to navigate, the ruin of the Company's China Trade would be considerably more direct and rapid; and the danger of the deprivation of Tea to the inhabitants of these Kingdoms much more imminent. These Islands, as stated by the Deputation of the Court of Directors, "would hold out irresistible temptations to lawless European Settlement, enterprise, and adventure, before which the Company's China Trade must sink, as this maritime resort

would certainly become the very focus of dangerous and illicit intercourse with the Continent of India."

As this private trade would, of course be carried on by a species of adventurers, who would not be much disposed to restrict themselves either to legal, or moral means, in order to render their voyages profitable, they would not, if it should appear to them to be conducive to that end to proceed into the China Seas, think it necessary to pay a very scrupulous regard to the limits that might be assigned to their destination by the New Charter. In this manner, an indefinite number of unconnected Europeans, with views of the most irregular kind, would find their way to the borders of the Chinese territories. We know how suspicious that government has always been of strangers; how indifferent in general to foreign intercourse; that they even banished the Europeans, at one period, to Macao; and that it is only by the great influence of the East India Company, and the regular conduct of their Servants, that their Ships are allowed to visit Canton, and their Super cargoes to reside there, during one part of the year.

What, then, would be the consequence of that sort of intercourse, which might be expected to take place, between the natives of China and Europeans of the description I have just mentioned, after the regular Ships, and the accredited Authorities, should leave Canton? Nothing but disorder; and the ultimate exclusion of all Europeans from

deemed expedient, under the system proposed, to appoint to the out-ports, would operate a farther diminution of the revenue; and that it could not fail to be otherwise very obnoxious to those, who are of opinion that the increase of all such appointments, by unduly augmenting the influence of the executive power, must trench upon the principles of the constitution.

But even at the price of this additional odium and expence, it would be so impracticable to prevent, or even to oppose a barrier to smuggling, if ships were permitted to unload at the out-ports, that it would almost of necessity become the principal occupation of the individual adventurers, who might engage in the East India Trade. The fair individual trader could not long successfully compete with the Company, who would of course continue their commercial operations, in their corporate capacity, as long as they were not an entire loss, or until, by the irregularity of the interlopers, the communication with China should be entirely stopped. One of the inevitable effects of the competition between the Company and the fair private trader, operating in conjunction with the high duties upon Tea, would be to render smuggling, with all its risks, by far the most gaming trade; and, "in fact, however covered or disguised, it would become the *principal object*."

Under the system in question, then, even in the limited shape originally proposed, it may very fairly

be maintained, that all the regulations which, the utmost extent of human ingenuity could devise, would not be sufficient to prevent smuggling, as it would be the most lucrative, from becoming the principal object of those, who should embark in the East India Trade. And there can be still less doubt that the evil would be farther aggravated, in as far as it is capable of aggravation, by the ulterior projects of allowing access to Private Ships to the Molucca Islands, and entrance into the out-ports of these Kingdoms ; but more especially by the admission into the trade of vessels of inferior burthen.

Such vessels could, in India, go into minor ports, and more easily form connection with the natives ; and their intercourse, and consequent irregularities, would be such as neither the vigilance or power of the Indian Governments, would be able to discover or controul. On their return, they could enter the small ports of England, Scotland, and Ireland, and easily elude the vigilance, or purchase the connivance of the Custom-House Officers.

That his Majesty's Ministers should not have felt the force, and admitted the validity of the irrefutable arguments adduced by the Deputation of the Court of Directors, against admitting vessels of this description to a participation in the India Trade, is to me extraordinary, and almost unaccountable. On this subject, the deputation express themselves in the fol-

lowing terms:—"In short, if a mere *distance outward*, for the sake of smuggling *homeward*, was the speculation and the object of adventurers, undoubtedly small Ships would best answer their purpose; but if an honourable commercial intercourse with India was the object of Government, it could only be maintained by Ships of a respectable size, and suitable equipment as to stores and force, under the conduct of able and responsible commanders and crews."

That the size of the ships, and the respectability of their equipments, are of importance, in a political, as well as in a commercial view, is evinced by the different degrees of respect paid to the Company's regular ships, and to those of the American traders, in the Eastern Seas. The large ships of the Company, equipped and disciplined as they are, and navigated by gentlemen of education, rank in society, and nautical skill, command respect, and insure obedience, from the natives of India. But should a rabble of vessels, of all sizes and denominations, be admitted to the Indian Seas, it requires not the gift of prophecy to foretell that, with much immediate mischief to the Company, and almost the annihilation of the revenue arising from the regular trade, their course will be marked with irregularities and crimes, that will bring indelible disgrace on the British character and name in the East, and lead eventually to the

interruption of all intercourse with the Chinese Empire.

But farther, the whole of this measure appears to me to be a departure, on the part of Ministers, from their implied agreement with the East India Company, which professed to found the renewal of their Charter, on the principles of the Acts of 1784 and 1793. It is, also, in its two ulterior ramifications, a complete deviation from the principles upon which the negotiation between Lord Melville and the East India Company, had begun and proceeded. It is even directly repugnant and contradictory to his Lordship's consent to the sixth proposition of the Court of Directors, namely, that "the whole of the Indian Trade should be brought to the Port of London, and the goods sold at the Company's sales."

This mode of proceeding, would seem to convey no very unequivocal intimation that the East India Company are not considered as possessing any rights, beyond what may suit the views of expediency of his Majesty's Ministers, for the time being, to permit them to retain; although I do not imagine that such a proposition will be asserted by them in terms. Of this, more hereafter.

* Since the above was written, this point appears to have been abandoned by his Majesty's Ministers.—*Vide Papers respecting the negotiation for a renewal of the East India Company's Exclusive Privileges*, p. 170.

But even if the East India Company were deemed to possess no positive rights, the evils which the Court of Directors have shewn, by a series of the most enlightened reasoning, founded upon their long experience, and an intimate knowledge of facts, must result to the Company, to the revenue, and to the Empire, from the meditated change, ought, in my opinion, to be sufficient to induce Ministers to pause, and reconsider their determination. It behoves them to reflect, that, unless they can call into their service a degree of ingenuity that is altogether supernatural,---by which the prevention of colonization, and of smuggling, can be rendered compatible with permission to Private Ships, of all sorts and sizes, to trade to India, and to enter the out-ports of these Kingdoms,---they will subject themselves to the imputation of making a rash and ill-considered experiment, of yielding to a senseless and unfounded clamour, and of courting a hollow popularity. If, besides, it should appear that the East India Company are actually possessed of positive rights, it would be to incur a dreadful responsibility, to introduce innovations, *prima facie* no less injurious and unjust towards that great body, than in their immediate and obvious consequences, palpably pregnant with calamity to the whole Empire.

It is difficult not to be persuaded that, in this matter, Ministers, as they cannot be supposed to have meditated the ruin of the East India Company

by a side wind, have not acted from conviction; but that they have allowed their better judgments to be borne down by the clamours of certain petitioners; who know not the consequences of what they are demanding, or that they have timidly yielded to a presumed necessity arising from the pressure of the times. This, however, is matter of little consequence; for we are not enquiring into motives, but effects. The laying open the trade to India to the out-ports, has been aptly denominated a question of existence with the East India Company. But it is also calculated to affect no less vitally that portion of the public revenue, which depends upon the regular India Trade: and, in its ultimate consequences, even the integrity and safety of the British empire. On this question, his Majesty's Ministers have shewn much inconsistency. They expressly declare their conviction, "that the great interests of *policy* and of *revenue*, as well as of the *East India Company*," require, "that the *existing restraints* respecting the intercourse with China should continue; and that the exclusive Trade in *Tea* should be preserved to the Company." Yet the direct, and almost immediate effect of the measure, which they now propose, would be, according to the best judgment of those who have most knowledge of the subject, to destroy every vestige of those exclusive privileges, which they thus admit to be necessary to the policy of the Empire at large!

It has already been fully demonstrated, in the celebrated Letter of Messrs. Grant and Parry, and in the subsequent correspondence of the Court of Directors with the Board of Controul, and is indeed universally acknowledged by those who are acquainted with the subject, in all its bearings, that the continuance of an exclusive trade to China, or even of intercourse with that country, is altogether incompatible with the admission of private ships to the trade of India, especially if their burthen should be discretionary, if they should have access there to the Molucca Islands, and to the out-ports of these Kingdoms upon their return.

It is in fact the opinion of many, that should this measure, with its various ramifications, be persisted in by Ministers, it would be utterly impossible that the Company should go on for any length of time: and that it would be much more advisable now to begin to wind up their concern, than be obliged to do so a few years hence, under still more unfavourable circumstances, and with more impoverished means.

It has been shewn, that the immediate consequences of the competition, which would arise, not so much from the fair as from the clandestine trader, under colour of this commerce, would be, an abridgement of the Company's sales, and a sinking of their finances. Events which would soon be followed by the necessity of relinquishing their great establishments; of laying up their vast fleets, now the means of transporting troops and stores, as well as of de-

feending their commerce; and of abandoning their buildings, wharfs, warehouses, and other articles of dead stock, formed at a prodigious expence, and suited only to the Indian Trade, which had so long been their's, all of which would, in such case, become useless and deserted! With the decline of the Company, would be thrown out of activity and employ, twenty-one millions of capital, 1400 commanders and officers, 8000 seamen, 12000 tradesmen, 3000 labourers, and seventy-eight of the finest ships in the world, many of them fit to take their station in line of battle with the British Navy!

The practice of using the *port of London* only, for the East India Trade, which has existed since the first institution of the Company, has been productive of advantages too numerous and too well defined to admit of being relinquished upon the mere presumption of uncertain or remote benefits. The custom of selling their imports, at stated periods, by public auction, has been nearly coeval with the Company. These sales are open, honourable and satisfactory; and are resorted to, with confidence, by the Merchants of the Continent of Europe, as well as by those of Great Britain. So high indeed is the character of the Company with foreign merchants, that purchases have been made by them "on the faith merely of the descriptive marks; and goods (thus marked), on their arrival on the Continent, frequently pass through various hands, before they are finally unpacked." The in-

juries and frauds, to which an alteration in this mode, consecrated by the practice of centuries, would necessarily give rise, may be readily conceived.

For the security of the revenue arising from the Trade to India, as has been well observed by the Deputation of the Court of Directors, "nothing so effectual could be devised as to bring the *imports* to one place; to have them lodged under the keys of the Government Officers; to have them sold publicly in the presence of those officers; and finally to have the duties (upwards of four millions *per annum*);* thus carefully ascertained, collected through the medium of the Company, and with *hardly any charge* to government! In short," say they, "the present system affords the most complete provision that can be imagined against defect, fraud, or expence, in realizing this branch of the revenue to the Public."

Although we may not be able to say to what precise degree the measure of laying open the Trade to India to private ships, might, in its least noxious operation, immediately affect this branch of the public revenue; there can be no doubt that, by the partial fulfilment of the evils apprehended, it would be considerably injured, and by their total fulfilment destroyed.

* £4,213,425, according to the returns of last year.

It cannot, independently of these considerations, be supposed to make any difference to the East India Company, whether the Trade to India be carried on exclusively from the port of London, or from that of Bristol, Liverpool, or Glasgow; or indiscriminately from all the ports of the United Kingdom. But, since the dangers to be apprehended from the innovations proposed, are as obvious and as well founded as they are great and alarming, it is a duty which that body owe to themselves and to the nation not to submit to them without a struggle.

Accordingly, it was with a spirit fully justified by the occasion, that Sir Hugh Inglis, the present Chairman of the Court of Directors, in a conference with Lord Buckinghamshire, declared it "as his opinion, that the Court of Directors, in the first instance, and the Court of Proprietors, when laid before them, would resist, by every means in their power, a measure so fatal to the vital interests of the Company and to the public revenue as would be the measure of allowing the ships of individuals to import into any place but the *port of London*," adding, that "situated as he was, he should consider it his duty to resist, and to recommend to the Court of Directors, and ultimately to the Proprietors, to resist the proposition."

And this overwhelming ruin, it seems, is to be brought upon the East India Company, and those connected with them, not only without the offer, but without the smallest chance or prospect of indemnity.

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fication. Nay, ~~after~~ they should have suffered themselves, as a matter of right, to be tamely despoiled of their commercial, they might prepare to surrender their territorial privileges at discretion. Into the nature of their rights to both, and to consequent indemnity upon the deprivation of either, I shall take occasion more fully to inquire.

And for what beneficial purpose, for what grand object, is this sum of ruin, or even the risk of it, to be incurred? In order (supposing the best, and that the communication with China should not be interrupted), to transfer the same quantity of oriental commerce from London to the out-ports, and from the East India Company to private Merchants! These are the sole objects for which such mighty innovations are now to be attempted; for which a concern that has subsisted for ages, and so succeeded as to be the wonder and envy of the world, is to be subverted and destroyed: and that too on the instigation, or hypothetical reasoning of persons, who erroneously expect, to procure to themselves extraordinary advantages, from a participation in the Trade on which they would deprive the Company.

The only result of any importance to the Public, which we are promised from this innovation, is altogether visionary and fallacious. It is well known to those who are acquainted with India, that the Trade, in European commodities, to that country, is wholly, or almost wholly incapable of being ex-

tended. The reverse of this proposition, which is the very first point to be adjusted in this controversy, has been invariably taken for granted, instead of being deliberately examined and decided: and upon this flimsy foundation has been raised the flimsy superstructure of the advocates of what has been called the "Open Trade."

The manufactures of Great Britain, which are annually exported to India, are almost exclusively consumed by the Europeans resident in that country: and until these become much more numerous than they are at present, which can only happen in consequence of colonization, the demand for such articles cannot be extended, but in a very inconsiderable degree. This incapability of extension, which depends upon the peculiar, and almost unchangeable character of the natives of Asia, is a fact too notorious to admit of being denied, or explained away by the abstract reasonings of political economists. To the state of India, at least, their principles cannot for ages apply. This has been set forth, in a clear, satisfactory, and convincing manner, by Messrs. Grant and PARRY, in their Letter of April 1809, and in the correspondence of the successive Chairmen of the Court of Directors, since that period, with the President of the Board of Control, on the subject of the renewal of the Company's Charter. Referring the reader, who wishes to be fully acquainted with the details, to those very able

documents, I shall content myself here with stating a few simple but strong facts, which, in my humble apprehension, it is impossible to reconcile to a contrary conclusion.

Of the three thousand tons *per annum*, which the Company are bound, by the act of 1793, to retain for the accommodation of private traders, not above 1200 tons annually, on an average of eighteen years, have been claimed, or little more than one third: and of this 1200 tons, 430, or more than one third, were wine and beer, which articles are consumed by Europeans almost exclusively.

Had there been a demand for any greater quantity of goods than is annually exported by the Company, by the commanders and officers of their ships, and by the private traders admitted under the act of 1793, amounting in all to about two millions sterling, the remainder of the tonnage allowed to private traders by that act would surely have been claimed. This, by the genius of commerce, I hold to be conclusive evidence.

That this tonnage was not claimed, then, shews demonstratively that there has not been, since 1793, an increasing demand, to any extent, for the European articles of consumption, used either by the European or native inhabitants of India. Those consumed by the natives, ~~this~~ well known, are few and inconsiderable. With such, however, as they have occasion for, they are abundantly supplied by the

agency of private traders, resident in the East, whose industry embraces all the ports, to which the commerce of the Company does not extend. This, when carried on by sea, is called the country, or coasting trade. But it also extends its ramifications by land, to the most minute portions of the interior of Asia. And the knowledge and experience of those concerned in it would surely leave nothing of any great value for rivals, fresh from Europe, to explore.

It has been a grievous accusation against the East India Company, that they have neglected to cultivate the trade to several parts within their limits, and prevented the export of our manufactures to "some of the largest and richest regions of the world," where, say the complainants, "there is reason to believe the private merchant might, in the course of an open trade, increase his profits *twenty-fold and upwards*." The parts here more especially alluded to, are the Eastern coasts of Africa, the coasts of the Gulfs of Arabia and Persia, and the shores of the Red Sea. But, besides the proofs arising from the recorded efforts of the Company, even in early times, to extend the sale of British manufactures in those quarters, a sufficient refutation of this charge is to be found in its absurdity. Were it even possible to believe that the East India Company would have been so blind to their interests, as to have neglected a commerce, which would have

increased their profits "twenty-fold or upwards," it could never be credited that the same indifference to their worldly concerns would have affected the individual traders of the East, unless it be also believed that the climate of India possesses the quality of lessening, or destroying the ordinary cupidity of man. Of late times at least, these traders have existed in sufficient numbers to pervade every nook and corner of Asia: and it is not very probable that all of them would have overlooked so favourable an opportunity of speedily making their fortunes. It is notorious that all the attempts, which have been made, to extend the sale of European commodities in India, formerly by the Dutch and Portuguese, at all times by the East India Company, and latterly by American private traders, have failed. Where the efforts of the merchants of those several nations, both in a corporate and individual capacity, and possessing the benefit of great experience, have so long and so uniformly failed, by what species of magic is it that British individual traders, without experience, can now be expected to establish a lucrative trade?

The Americans, who eagerly explored every avenue to trade in India, were only able, in the six most flourishing years of their commerce, to export to that country £667,634 in merchandize and manufactures, including those of their own country; while, in bullion, they exported during the same

period; £4,543,662.* As the profits upon goods, had there been a demand for them, would have been much greater than on bullion, that the quantity of bullion was seven-eighths, and of goods only one-eighth of their whole exports to India, affords an incontrovertible inference that for the latter they found little or no demand. The reason is quite obvious. The consumption of European commodities is almost exclusively confined to European residents. The Company export annually upwards of a million sterling of goods and stores, the commanders and officers of their ships, nearly half a million more, and the private traders, admitted by the act of 1793, about £400,000. This supply, amounting to about two millions annually, appears to be adequate to the demand of all the Europeans in India; and the market is even frequently over-stocked. At the present rate of the increase of European inhabitants, this commerce can admit but of a very inconsiderable and a very slow extension; a shackle not to be removed but by a worse evil, the admission of European colonization in India.

It has been already shewn that the almost unchangeable character of the natives forms a lasting, if not an insuperable, bar to any considerable or rapid extension of the sale of European manufactures

* Vide Papers respecting the Negotiation for the renewal of the East India Company's exclusive Privileges, p.

among them. Consequently, it cannot be matter of surprize that the experiment of sending unusual quantities of European goods to India, as if the demand could be increased in proportion to the supply, should have failed, as often as it has been tried ; always bringing along with it the ruin of the adventurers.

This experiment was made as far back as the time of Cromwell. Individual speculators, and associations of merchants, as Courten's Association, the Assada merchants, and the Merchant Adventurers, traded to India, at that period, under licenses or commissions from the Protector.* The progress and the fate of these speculations were uniform. They injured the East India Company, by raising the price, and creating a scarcity of goods in India, as well as by importing a superabundance, and lowering the value of them at home. The competition also occasioned a glut of European goods, and consequently a loss upon them in the Indian market. And accordingly these adventurers were all either ruined by their speculations, or, in order to avoid ruin, forced to seek an union with the East India Company.†

In the same manner was terminated the career

* *Ibid* Bruce's *Annals of the Honourable East India Company*, Vol. I. pp. 435 and 508.

† *Ibid*, Vol. I. p. 572.

of other bodies of men, who subsequently entered into competition with the East India Company. From the time of Queen Elizabeth to the end of the seventeenth century, the commercial rights of this body were, at various other periods, as well as in the time of Cromwell, violated in the most scandalous and illegal manner. They were opposed by licenses from the Crown to private traders, contrary to the Charters and Privileges, which the Crown itself had granted; and those private traders, in sharing all the benefits of the commerce, were exempt from every charge or expenditure for establishments at home and abroad. By a still more outrageous violation of their rights, several years before the expiration of their Charter, a new Company was established, towards the end of the seventeenth century, under the denomination of "the *English East India Company*;" when the original Company, for the sake of distinction, assumed the title of "The *London East India Company*." After a struggle of several years, which materially injured the original Company, and almost wholly ruined the new one, this, like all former rivals, was obliged to seek its safety in an union. And hence arose, in 1707-8, that splendid body which now exists, under the appellation of "The *United East India Company*."

The history of the rivalry of these two Companies, before their union, and of the fate of some private speculators; who, under the constitution of

the new Company had claimed a right of trading on their individual stock, both illustrates and confirms the fact, that competition in the East India Trade ever has been, and, while the character of the natives of India remains unaltered, must continue to be productive of loss to the adventurers, without being attended with a single essential benefit to the public.

An experiment with similar, but more decisive results, was made in 1788-9, from Ostend, by persons, among others, who had been in the habits of dealing, as tradesmen, with the Commanders and Officers of the Company's Ships, and who might be supposed to have acquired a knowledge of the nature of the business in which they were embarking, at least considerably greater than can be possessed by the Merchants and Manufacturers, who have recently been petitioning the Legislature for permission to send Ships to India; or, in other words, for permission to ruin themselves, and to injure the East India Company. This trade was carried on under Imperial colours. And it must be in the recollection of every one, who was then in the Company's Sea Service, of every person who was resident at any of the Presidencies of India, and in general of all men of observation at that time connected with the East, in common with the

¹ For the history of this rivalry, see *Bruce's Annals of the Honourable East India Company*, *passim*.

suffering adventurers, what an extensive scene of ruin ensued. Many kinds of European Commodities were sold at from 50 to 75 per cent. discount; and even at that price but a very small quantity of what was imported could obtain a sale. The Commanders and Officers of the Company's Ships, and all others who were regularly engaged in the trade, were deeply injured by the competition of these interlopers; and most of themselves were irremediably ruined. I recollect hearing of one case, in which the product of the cargo was said not to be sufficient to pay the freight from Ostend; and the payment of it was successfully resisted in the Supreme Court of Judicature in Calcutta, on the ground of the transaction being illegal.

We have at this moment before our eyes an example of something similar in the fate of the commercial adventurers to Buenos Ayres, and other parts of South America. Although the impediments to the extension of sale for European Commodities, are not, in that country, either so complete or of so permanent a nature as in India, it is but too well known that most of the adventurers, who recently embarked in that trade, have been impoverished or ruined by the speculation; and that the manufactures of this country are now daily sold at auction at very reduced prices. Yet the expectations that were generally entertained of the immense benefits that would immediately be derived from the opening of so vast a field to commercial in-

tercourse, as the Continent of South America, have even been greater than those which were formed from an Open Trade to India. There is, however, this wide difference between the two cases, that, with respect to South America, there were no public interests to balance, no privileges to infringe, no rights to invade, no property to violate, before the private trader could have permission to run himself, if he pleased. Nay, there being no law to that effect, he could not be prevented from trading with South America, except by the constituted authorities of that country.

There are also other instances in point. At various periods, it has been deemed expedient to allow ships built in India to export cargoes of Rice, and other Commodities, to Britain. And the Commanders and Owners of these Ships being persons of experience, not choosing to invest cargoes here, upon which they would suffer an undoubted loss in India, have generally preferred returning in ballast.

In 1798, when Government, owing to the scarcity of grain which then prevailed, gave encouragement to private Merchants to send Ships to India for Rice, those who availed themselves of that liberty, were considerable losers by the adventure. And it afterwards cost Government a large sum of money to indemnify them.

Thus, by the uniform results of all the experiments which have been made, the impossibility of

giving any considerable extension to the trade to India, appears to be placed beyond a doubt. What then would be the consequences to the adventurers themselves, naturally to be expected from permitting an unlimited intercourse with that country, by private ships? One of the most immediate consequences would be that goods to the amount of perhaps twenty times more than there is a demand for, would be exported from Great Britain to India. Of this amount, nineteen-twentieths would remain on hand, to be returned to Europe at a double expence of freight and insurance, or to rot in the warehouses of India; while even the one-twentieth, for which there might be a demand, would, from the glut in the market, necessarily be sold greatly below prime cost. It must be, therefore, by singular caution and singular intelligence, or extreme good fortune, that any of the private adventurers, who might rashly embark in such a traffic, should escape being ruined. The Commanders and Officers of the Company's Ships, and consequently the tradesmen with whom they deal, would largely participate in the general calamity. Even the Company could not fail to suffer essential injury from so disastrous a competition. With respect to the Manufacturers, they would remain unpaid, to the extent of more than nineteen-twentieths of the goods sold, unless the adventurers could pay them out of their private fortunes. And all these evils would be unaccompanied, and uncompensated for, by any ul-

timatè increase in the quantity of British Manufactures consumed in, or exported to, India. On the contrary, in some instances the exports might be expected to diminish. The article of Tin, for instance, which the Company have usually exported at a loss from Cornwall, might be procured at Malacca, Banca, and other parts of India, at a cheaper rate, for the supply of the China market. And with respect to Woollens, what individual Merchants could, or would, like the Company, sacrifice £.50,000 annually, on this article alone, in order to encourage to the utmost the manufactures of the country? These are sacrifices, which, if the trade were laid open to private Ships, the Company could not be expected, even if they were able, to continue.

Supposing the intercourse with China, notwithstanding this measure, to remain uninterrupted, and the usual quantities of these articles to continue in demand, could the gentlemen of Cornwall and the manufacturers of Woollens, rationally expect from private adventurers equal liberality in prices, or punctuality in payments, as they have always experienced from the East India Company? Most certainly not: but, on the contrary, confusion, disappointment, and loss to all parties would inevitably ensue. Many years must elapse, and an extensive scene of ruin take place, before the trade, thus circumstanced, could find its level; i. e. before it could return to its original state. It is, therefore, obvious

that the distresses of the mercantile and manufacturing bodies, which it seemed in part to be the professed intention of this measure to relieve, would be thereby highly aggravated.

I shall here cite a few historical facts, which will aptly illustrate the pernicious consequences, on the markets both in India and Britain, which must flow from the unlimited intercourse of private Ships between the two countries. They will also incidentally shew the incapability, arising from the allotment of certain casts of the natives of India to particular occupations, of increasing the products of industry in that country, to correspond with any great or sudden increase of demand.

The Merchant Adventurers, who, in 1656-7, traded to India, under licenses or commissions, from Cromwell, in writing to their Commanders and Factors, on the low state of the markets for Indian produce in England, informs them "that the number of disconnected interlopers, or private Merchants, had much increased; and that, they had brought home great quantities of Indian Commodities, of *inferior* quality, particularly Cottons, Drugs, and Spices, which had *overstocked the market*." *

They are also complained of in their turn by the Servants of the Company. For we are told, that

* *Vide Bruce's Annals of the East India Company.—Vol. I. p. 521.*

"the interferences of the supercargues and shipping of the Merchant Adventurers had rendered the purchase of investments almost impracticable: these private, but now authorized traders, had brought out large quantities of English Goods, and sold them *below prime cost*, and with the money, with which they had been entrusted, had given *high prices* for such Indian articles as they had collected." * These are the complaints of the Company's Servants at Surat.

From Fort St. George, they complain that the Merchant Adventurers had "sold their European imports at *low rates*, and bought Indian Articles at *advanced prices*, which had rendered it impracticable to conform to the orders of the Court, to purchase an investment of the finest goods, that would yield a profit to the proprietors. The Ships of the Adventurers had touched, and made purchases at the ports of Negapatnam, Porto Novo, and Tranquebar, and, by exorbitant prices, had drained the country of goods; which had reduced the Presidency to the necessity of purchasing such Coast Cloths, and such proportions of Pepper and Spices, as could be collected at Bantam, to make up a small investment for Europe.†

These extracts abundantly prove, that, under a competition of private speculators, the Indian mar-

* Vide Bruce's *Annals of the East India Company*, Vol. 1. p. 523.

† *Ibid.* p. 525.

kets were glutted with European Goods, which, it being impracticable to extend their consumption, were sold below prime cost, to the loss or ruin of the importer. That these private Merchants bought Indian Commodities at exorbitant prices, and drained the country of goods; showing that a considerable increased demand for the Manufactures of India cannot be quickly supplied, but by a deterioration of their quality. And that, with these goods, they overstocked the European market. By each of these three operations, those adventurers must be presumed to have lost; and, by their competition, to have occasioned a loss to the East India Company, as well as, by their inability to discharge their obligations, to have injured the tradesmen, with whom they might have dealt on credit in this country.

Now, until the character of the inhabitants of India shall have undergone a considerable alteration, a similar competition must again produce similar results. Were the trade to India laid open to marrow to private ships, the effects of that measure upon the markets, both at home and abroad, would necessarily be almost precisely such as have been described. To all who might be concerned in this traffic, it would be but a competition for priority of ruin; and, without the consolation of a single incidental benefit arising from it to either country.

With respect to Great Britain, in a view of the balance of trade, I cannot help thinking that these

changes, in so far as their influence might go, could not but be unfavourable. The benefits to India would be but partial and trifling, as they would be limited to those particular tribes, who manufacture the fabrics in demand; and these advantages would be more than counterbalanced by incidental evils. The number of these manufacturers could not be increased on any emergency, and consequently their supply could not be augmented to the level of an unusual demand, but by the deterioration of their commodities. Colonization, or a change from other causes in the character of the natives, must make considerable progress, before we can expect to see the use of machinery introduced among them. Yet some of the petitioners for *the right of open trade*, at the last renewal of the Company's Charter, solicited that the natives of India *might not be allowed the use of machinery*! Such is human consistency.

The objections already urged against the admission of private ships to trade from Britain to India, will of course apply, with equal force, to the admission of private ships, built in India, and not in the Company's service, to trade from India to Britain. This interference would have precisely the effects upon the markets of both countries, which have been already described. Ships of this description would experience much difficulty in finding cargoes for Europe; and they would be obliged to return to India, with scarcely any other

article than specie, and ballast. It is true that in years of scarcity in this country, ships built in India have, by special permission and encouragement, been allowed to import rice to England. But, even under these unusual circumstances, they were suffered to unload at the port of London only; they were all of a certain tonnage, and their cargoes were sold at the Company's regular sales; by which means they were rendered, in a considerable degree, subject to the jurisdiction of the Company.

The fate of the adventurers, who might embark in this speculation, excepting in so far as they might be secured by the profits of a rice cargo in a period of great scarcity, would be similar to those, who might fit out private ships from Europe. As far as they might confine themselves to a fair trade, they would be losers both by the outward and homeward cargoes: and they could only to a certainty calculate on the amount of their freight.

Thus, without any public benefit either to India or Britain, the immediate and obvious consequences of the measure in question, would be a grievous injury, and injustice to the East India Company; an enormous loss to the British revenue; the ruin of every individual who might engage in a competition of fair trade; an irresistible encouragement to smuggling; and detriment to the consumer, by the certain deterioration of all the commodities of the East.

From this immense change, the illicit trader

alone would derive benefit. By the retail consumer, the fall in the price of the commodities of the East in Europe, and of the commodities of Europe in the East, although sufficient to ruin the wholesale importer, would scarcely be felt as an advantage. With respect to the commodities of India, the difference would be more than compensated by the deterioration to which every article would be subject, in India from the competition in the market, and in Europe, in passing through the hands of the clandestine trader, or in the progress of irregular sales. At present, the consumer has the certainty of procuring articles of unquestionable goodness, and at a price unquestionably fair, at the Company's public sale. How differently might he be served, if cast for his supply upon the cupidity, specious pretences, or chicane, of thousands of individual importers and dealers? With respect to tea especially, the revival of smuggling might be expected again to introduce, as formerly, a spurious, fraudulent, and deleterious article. From such a change, then, the consumer, or the public, in Great Britain, could not be in any degree benefited, but might be considerably incommoded.

With respect to European commodities, the diminution of their retail prices, which a competition would occasion in India, although attended by irreparable loss to the wholesale importer, could be no object to the wealthy European inhabitants of that country, who are their principal consumers.

Nor can the trifling diminution in the price of

tonnage, which might take place in consequence of admitting private ships into the trade, be an object worthy of consideration to the importer or consumer, were not the measure otherwise fraught with the dangers, which have been so fully set forth. This will appear from a comparison of the freight paid by the East India Company, with that which was formerly paid to private ships from Ostend.*

I shall not insist here on the facility, which would arise from the admission of private ships to the trade of India, of clandestinely supplying an enemy with salt-petre in time of war, or on the approach of war, both because it is too obvious to require elucidation, and because the temptations would be notoriously too great to admit of prevention.

From all that has been said, I trust it has been rendered evident, that the benefits which some mercantile and manufacturing bodies, in this country have promised to themselves, from the admission of private ships to the trade of India, is nothing but a mere delusion, and a delusion too of the most dangerous kind. If, however, it could, on the contrary, be shewn, that such a measure would be attended with the most unequivocal advantages to these bodies of men, with what colour of justice, or of decency, it may be asked, could the East India Company be on that account deprived, without a compensation, of that most essential portion of

* *Vide Drace's Report of the Negotiation between the East India Company and the Public, &c. p. 63.*

their privileges, which has been shewn to be the safeguard of the remainder?

Upon the subject of the rights of the Company, much misapprehension, and some designed suppression of the truth appear to have taken place.

Some of the advocates for an Open Trade, have chosen to represent the expiration of the Company's exclusive privileges, as the termination of a lease, or the repassing of rights back from the East India Company to the Nation. This is, however, by no means a just analogy, or a fair representation. The privileges of commerce, and the right to territory in the East, were not originally *vested* in the Nation, and therefore could not, as a matter of course, be resumed by it. They are *acquired* by the wisdom, and the treasure of the Company; and by the valour of their armies. They were, consequently, not of the nature of a leasehold property, which, at the expiration of an appointed period, reverts to the owner, and may in justice be disposed of by him, for another term of years, to the highest bidder. The property of the Company is more of the nature of a freehold, which cannot in justice be taken away, but for the essential accommodation of the public, distinctly and unequivocally ascertained, and that by a regular process fixed, if not expressly by law, at least by the acknowledged principles of the laws of this Country. These laws require, that, when the owner of an estate is to be deprived of any part of his property, for the benefit and convenience of the public, as in making high roads and bridges,

he should be amply indemnified, and that by the verdict of a jury of his countrymen. Now this verdict must, in justice, be founded on what it may rationally be presumed the property would bring to the owner at a fair sale. This analogy, although correct as far as it goes, is however, by no means complete. For where can we find a jury capable of estimating, upon any ascertained or familiar principles, the value of the East India Company's territories, and of the trade which depends upon them? We may, indeed, form some faint idea of their value by supposing what would be bid for them by the crowned heads of Europe, if set up to public auction. The price offered, we may readily conceive, would be immense; and such would be the only just criterion of their true value.

But what indemnity has been offered to the Company for the exclusive privilege of trade, or rather of employing shipping, to India, of which it is now proposed to deprive them? Has it never, for a moment occurred to those Petitioners who are so anxious for participation in their trade, that its existence depends upon the territorial dominion and influence of the Company; that it has cost them immense sums to establish it on its present extensive and flourishing scale; or that it might not be unreasonable to offer them some small compensation for the privilege which they were required to relinquish? This privilege I hold to be their undoubted property, as much as their territories in India, or

their freeholds in Britain ; a property of which they cannot justly be deprived by any power or authority, without an adequate remuneration. But what can be an adequate remuneration, short of the whole value of their property, for that part of it, by the relinquishment of which it has been shown that all their remaining privileges would be, not simply endangered, but certainly lost ?

Were it, however, agreed that the East India Company should be in the first instance fully indemnified, for their territory, trade, and property of every denomination ; and were a jury appointed capable of estimating upon fair grounds, the value of that property ; it would next be necessary to consider from what sources the Crown, or his Majesty's Ministers, could draw the amount required for the purchase, having, moreover, first proved the utility to the public, of the intended transfer, before they could, in justice or propriety, propose that the Company should be deprived of their exclusive privileges.

It is, I believe, universally admitted, that the Company have a positive and absolute right to their Forts, Factories, Warehouses, Docks, Ships, and Stock of every denomination ; and that these were all acquired precisely in the same manner, in which they acquired their Territory and Trade ; i. e. by labour, negotiation, or purchase. Now, it would be a curious position to hold, and I should like to see the arguments, or to hear the authorities by

which it might be supposed, that they have not an equal right, or that they have no right at all, to those different kinds of property.

With respect to the Sovereignty of India, which it has been asserted that the Crown has the right, without any public necessity, and without an equivalent, to *resume*, or more correctly, to *appropriate*, let me ask whether it was upon such a principle that the Duke of Athol was divested of the Sovereignty of the Isle of Man? No. A regular negotiation took place, and he was paid £100,000 for it! And if the Sovereignty of the Isle of Man be estimated at £100,000, what may be the value of that of British India? These considerations might have merited some little attention.

That the Legislature have the power, without any public necessity, and even without remuneration, of depriving the East India Company of that part of their exclusive privileges, which has been shewn to be the bulwark and support of the remainder, as they are supreme, I do not question. But as they are just, I should be infinitely surprised, if a mere clamour, not even popular, but arising from the misguided selfishness of a few commercial and manufacturing bodies, could have the effect of inducing them, whatever may be the decision of his Majesty's Ministers, for a moment to entertain the notion that so dangerous, or rather so fatal a measure, can possibly be expedient.

While the evils, which would inevitably result from the measure of laying open the Trade to India, in the manner proposed, are obvious to every one; the benefits, which would arise from it, are considered as doubtful by the best informed upon the subject, even of the very Ministers who have proposed it. That Lord Melville is against the measure of admitting the ships of private Merchants into the India Trade, appears sufficiently evident from the following paragraph of his Letter to the Chairs, dated the 20th of March, 1812:—"You will do me the *justice* to recollect, that in all our discussions on this subject, both recently and on former occasions, the admission of *the ships* of Merchants in this country into the trade of India, in concurrence with those of the Company, has never been urged as a measure from which much immediate benefit would, in my opinion, be derived, either to the *country*, or to the *individuals* who might embark in the speculation; and I certainly am not without *considerable apprehensions* that at least, on the first opening of the Trade, the Public expectation as to the British territories in India affording any considerable outlet for British manufactures, beyond the amount of *our present exports, may be disappointed.*" This declaration, although expressed with the reserve of a statesman, distinctly manifests the opinion of that Minister who must be presumed to be the best acquainted with the affairs of India. And the removal of Lord Melville, shortly after the date of this

letter from the Board of Control, as well as the extension of the permission to private ships to sail from and to the out-parts of this Kingdom, which had never till then been proposed, are no unequivocal proofs that, in respect to this extraordinary measure, he was overruled in the Cabinet; and that he did not find it consistent either with his own dignity, or with his implied engagements with the Court of Directors, any longer to remain in a situation in which he could neither support the one or fulfil the other.

His Majesty's Ministers must have been aware, that they could not, with safety to their situations, have proposed, in a direct manner, any essential change in the territorial government. To transfer it to the Crown, as has been sometimes talked of, or to vest it in Commissioners for life, as once proposed by Mr. Fox, would at this day be, almost universally reprobated, as fraught with the most dangerous consequences to the Constitution of the country. Ministers have therefore deemed it most expedient, under the inadmissible conditions already stated, to propose to leave the territorial government of the Indian Empire, as at present, under the immediate management of the East India Company, through its executive organ, the Court of Directors. It would also be dangerous, they found, to disturb too openly the course of the China Trade: and this too, for that reason, they have proposed, apparently, to leave to the Company. It does not indeed appear,

that, independent of necessity, considerations of justice have been allowed any weight in favour of the claims of this great and powerful body. It seems rather to have been the determination, that the Company should be ruined, either indirectly, by the acceptance of conditions, which would eventually occasion the loss both of their trade and territories, or directly, by a rejection of them, which would supply Ministers with a pretext of transferring to the Crown the power and the patronage of India.

It could scarcely, I think, have been imagined, that the East India Company could have thought it a boon to be allowed to retain merely that portion of their privileges which it might suit the fluctuating expediency of his Majesty's Ministers to leave to them; or that they could receive with deference and submission, any conditions which they might be pleased to annex to their introducing into Parliament a proposition for the renewal of the Charter.

On the contrary, I am well persuaded there is not, at this moment, an individual Member of that Body who would not much rather relinquish at once the whole of their privileges to the Public,—stock, territory, buildings, shipping, and trade,—at a fair valuation, than to have their Charter renewed, for an additional period, in a mutilated and unsafe state. But it was not meant that a choice should be left them; and it is now intimated, not in very measured terms, that Ministers will not on any

other conditions than those they have already stated, propose to Parliament a renewal of their Charter.

It will then remain to be seen whether the Company have no means of introducing into Parliament a measure for the preservation of their rights and privileges than through the medium of his Majesty's present Ministers. If not, it must be admitted, that the affairs of the nation are to be regarded as henceforth entirely dependent upon the will and pleasure of the servants of the crown.

Much has been said, by the opponents of the Company, of the absurdity of Merchants being sovereigns; of their being plunged in debt and approaching towards ruin: and of the government of India being a solicism in politics,—an *imperium in imperio*.

For the truth of the remark, that their interests as Merchants have been not only perfectly compatible with their interests as sovereigns, but that these characters have respectively aided each other, we may adduce the high authority of the late Lord Melville, than whom no man of his time had a more complete knowledge of the affairs of India. “By the commercial capital of the Company at home,” says this able statesman, “acting in connection with the public revenues under their administration abroad, they have mutually aided and administered to the wants of each other; and the result has been, the fortunate achievement of those brilliant events, upon the success of which depended the existence of the

government, the territorial wealth, and the Trade of India."

During the whole period of the present Charter, the political has been invariably debtor to the commercial concern of the Company. But they have also mutually aided each other. As the territorial revenues have been frequently applied to purposes of commercial investment, so have the returns of commerce been rendered subservient to military and political operations.

With respect to the debt of the East India Company, when it is considered that their permanent debt in India and in Europe is only between 28 and 29 millions;* that the population of their territories is 60 millions; and the gross annual revenue 16 millions; it will appear comparatively small, and even insignificant. It is only at the rate of 10*s.* a head for each individual of the population, while that of Great Britain is at the rate of £60 a head; being as one to one hundred, and twenty. The East India Company's affairs, then, so far from being in a state to create despondency, as has been so frequently and so erroneously asserted, may be said to be in a most flourishing condition. The actual state of their territories is such as to leave no apprehensions of expensive or permanent hostility with

* £28,814,174.

the native powers; and Lord Minto, the present enlightened Governor-General, has recently conveyed to the Court of Directors assurances of his confident expectations, not only of bringing the expenditure within the income, but of realizing a large surplus revenue beyond the ordinary expences in time of peace. From all this, it appears most manifest, not only that the apprehensions of the insolvency of the Company, so often expressed in and out of Parliament, have been either wholly feigned, or have arisen from a total ignorance of their real situation; but that, on the contrary, they are in a state not to be shaken, but by some great and unexpected convulsion, or by the adoption of some such destructive measure as that with which they are now threatened.

Since 1793, both the population and the revenues of the Company's territories have been almost trebled* and the duties on their Import Trade to Britain have augmented in at least a similar ratio.† Their annual exports from this country are now £2,320,000; their tonnage 101,797 tons. If this

* In 1793, the revenue of India, on an average of three years, amounted to £6,897,730.- Bruce's Report, &c. p. 47. It is now sixteen millions.

† In 1793, the Duties on the Company's Import Trade exceeded one million (Bruce, p. 46): it now exceeds four.

the impending ruin, it is of a nature of which it is not usual to complain.

As to the system of Indian government being an *imperium in imperio*, which must mean, if it means any thing, that it is incompatible with the constitution with the constitution of this country, I would ask, were any defence necessary, are not the British laws extended to the inhabitants of India, in as full a measure as their situation will allow? Are they not as well administered even as at home? And is not the condition of the natives of that country, who are under the dominion of the Company, as enviable as that of the inhabitants of any portion of the globe? I will add more so: and those persons would not be their friends, who might advise that the highest parts of the British constitution, should be prematurely extended to them.

I am not aware that any objections worthy of notice, to a renewal of the Company's exclusive privileges, for another term of years, have been left unanswered. I do not, however, think that, in the course of the discussions which have taken place on this subject, the Company's rights, and the injustice of violating those rights, without a palpable benefit to the public, and a full indemnification to themselves, have been always sufficiently insisted on. At no period of the monarchy, from the granting of their Charter by Queen Elizabeth, to the protectorate of Cromwell, nor even by that usurper, were

the Company's rights to their forts, factories, or privileges of trade, called into question.* Nor does it appear how, by the subsequent extension of territory and trade, which they effected, their rights to these possessions can be presumed to have, in any manner, diminished. This question has however, since that period, been carefully kept out of view; and the Company have been treated, at the different eras of the renewal of their charters, as a body, who had no rights or privileges, but such as His Majesty's Ministers, for the time being, might choose to leave to them, upon receiving a valuable consideration for the exigencies of the state. They have been treated as candidates for the renewal of a lease, having scarcely any superior claims to other bodies of men, who might bid equally high for the privilege of being constituted an East India Company. In this manner, contrary to all right and justice, was a second East India Company at one period formed, for the sake of a temporary accommodation in money to government; and the competition nearly proved the ruin of both. The violation of the Company's rights, by illegal licences to individuals, and associations, was also no unfrequent occurrence in their history. But the plan which is now meditated of depriving them of that privilege, by which alone

Vide Bruce's Annals of the East India Company, Vol. 1.
p. 572.

they can deem their other privileges secure, I cannot but consider as a no less unjustifiable, and a much more dangerous violation of their rights, than any that has ever before been attempted.

As it is evinced by facts, so it is by the authority of eminent names, that the Government and Commerce of India are incapable of being separated, but at the imminent risk of destruction to both. Lord Melville, in his Letter to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, of the 28th December, 1808, says:---“ I have not yet heard, or read any arguments against the continuance of the system under which the British possessions in India are governed, of sufficient weight to counterbalance the practical benefits which have been derived from it, in their increased and increasing prosperity, and the general security and happiness of their inhabitants.” On the same subject, the late Lord Melville, whose opinion on such matters is entitled to the highest deference, thus expresses himself, in a Letter of April 2, 1800:---“ I remain equally satisfied as to the propriety of continuing a monopoly of trade, (by this is meant as to *ships*; for as to *goods*, a monopoly did not exist) in the hands of the East India Company. Those who maintain the reverse, appear to me to be misled by general theories, without attending to the peculiar circumstances of the trade they are treating of. Viewing it even as a *mere commercial* question, I believe this proposition to be a sound one; and if the trade were

laid open, the supposed advantages thence arising are at best very problematical, and would certainly be very precarious and short-lived. *It is, however, totally to forget the question, to treat it as a mere commercial one! The same principles which prove the necessity of the monopoly of Trade. The Government and the Trade are interwoven together!* And we have only to recur to a very recent experience, to learn the immense advantages which have flowed from that connection of Government and Trade."

The Chairmen of the Court of Directors had, three years ago, pointed out to the President of the Board of Control, that the effects of the innovation proposed would "amount to the destruction of the Company's Indian trade, their Indian Commercial Establishments, their Indian Shipping, and finally leave the China Monopoly so insulated and unsupported, as to bring that down also, and with it the whole fabric of the Company."

But what have we on the other side to counter-balance those strong facts, those incontrovertible inferences, and those high Authorities? Nothing but the vague and hypothetical reasonings of men, who erroneously conceive that they would themselves be benefited by a participation in the trade to India. It is, then, earnestly to be hoped that Ministers, if such indeed be their motive, will not "persist in this ruinous submission to known com-

bination, and over-bearing importunity ;” or at any rate, that the “ wisdom of Parliament and the justice of the nation will reject those rash and violent innovations, evidently suggested from a deplorable ignorance of facts.”

FINIS.

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LETTERS

ON THE

East India Monopoly,

ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED IN THE GLASGOW CHRONICLE,

WITH

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

LETTERS

—

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ORIGINALLY PUBLISHED

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WITH

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS

SECOND EDITION.

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1812.

TO THE
GLASGOW COMMITTEE

FOR PROMOTING A
FREE TRADE TO INDIA,
THE FOLLOWING RE-PUBLICATION OF

LETTERS

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Letters, on the East India Company's Monopoly, were written at various intervals, during the close of last year, and beginning of the present, and successively published in the *Glasgow Chronicle* ; for which they were expressly written ; and farther, than the circulation which that Paper might afford them, the writer had no intention of giving himself any concern about them, from a persuasion that they were not of sufficient importance to merit it. As to their intrinsic value, he is much of the same opinion

still ; they were hurriedly written, at intervals snatched from more necessary pursuits, and a similar disadvantage attends their republication—if such a circumstance, within an Author's own power of correction, ought to be received as an apology for slovenly composition. All the merit he contends for, is that of having directed the attention of his countrymen, to a subject they had been in the habit of thinking very little about, and of having given them, in, he hopes, an inoffensive manner and temperate language, the results of his own experience and reflection, on the important subject he has undertaken to discuss.

IN venturing these Letters before the Public, in a collective shape, the

ON THE

EAST INDIA MONOPOLY.

LETTER FIRST.

To the Chairman and Directors of the Chamber of Commerce of Glasgow.

GENTLEMEN,

As the next Session of Parliament is destined, in all probability, to confirm or abolish the exclusion of British merchants and merchandise from nearly one half of the Globe, it becomes the paramount duty of every well wisher to the interests of his country to bring the subject under discussion; and to examine with care every argument for and against the renewal of that Monopoly, the policy of which has been so long questioned, both by speculative writers and practical merchants, while its continuance is still persevered in.

The merchants of Glasgow are not proverbially accused of want of enterprise, or of slumbering over their own interests, (at least by their Southern-neighbours,) yet certain it is, that at a time when their manufactures are vigorously excluded from, unquestionably, the most extensive market of consumption in the world, the greatest part of civilized Europe, and that to which they are admitted, narrowed by the ravages of a desolating warfare; when the United States are threatening similar measures, in redress of real or supposed grievances—when South America rejecting their proffered traffic, is more busily and usefully engaged in demolishing the fetters that have bound her in centuries of servitude—and when Bankruptcy is assailing them at home, in the most various and distressing forms imaginable, yet, at such a time, is the subject of the renewal of the East India Company's Charter as little canvassed, or even thought of, by our merchants, as if every port in the world was open to their enterprise, and the most unbounded success attending them at home.

Two reasons may be advanced to account for this otherwise inexplicable apathy, viz. their previous habits, never having been allowed even to think beyond the limits of the Cape of Good Hope, the world beyond that point is to them as if it

had never existed—except, perhaps, in the story, real or fictitious, of some plundered Nabob; or the marvellous epistles of an expatriated Cadet, for whom that otherwise unknown region has been found a convenient place of *banishment*.—And, 2d, their doubts as to the efficiency of the Oriental markets, the staple manufactures of which are so nearly similar to their own; that is, chiefly, manufactured Cottons. The former, frequency of discussion alone can obviate; to the latter, it may be answered, that to the advantages of the trade of every region of the world, *where Arts exist*, a similar doubt may more or less attach; the conclusion from which would be, that the most desirable commerce for a country to engage in, is a commerce with savages, the advantages of which I have seldom heard extolled. Wherever Manufactures are established, such establishment must always interfere more or less with similar manufactures of our own country, either in home or foreign markets, and render the demand for them less; but this should be no argument for prohibiting competition.

IMPRESSED with a due sense of the importance of the question, and though certainly possessing less information than I would wish, and my readers may require of me, yet, seeing no hope of an abler writer coming forward, I have prestuned to

offer a few detached reasons for your bringing your minds to bear upon a question of mercantile policy, in which the public in general, and you as merchants in particular, are, in my apprehension, deeply interested. The end I have in view will be accomplished, if through my humble labours the subject shall engage more general attention.

To those who are not already satisfied of the evil tendency of Monopoly, on general principles, I would recommend the fourth book of Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, and almost every political writer of modern times; particularly some recent, and very able articles in the *Edinburgh Review*. As a general question of *theory*, no one seems to doubt that the Monopoly should cease; but danger it is apprehended may arise from the adoption in practice of a system of commercial policy, new in its operations, and which must supersede the long established forms, of one of the most magnificent Mercantile Institutions the world ever beheld, and the probability of involving in the change the form of Government of a large portion of the Globe.

My intention is to confine myself to a very short discussion of the two following objects, viz.

THE advantages of a free trade with India to Great Britain, in general.


AND the peculiar advantages of such a measure to Glasgow, in particular.

AND here I must beg of those who honour me with a reading, to consider the question free of all prejudice or partiality. The subject is not, or ought not to be a party one, but should be examined with a view to its own merits alone, and considered with all the attention due to such questions as involve great political consequences—the future prosperity and well being of two extensive and powerful Empires, and the happiness of millions of their subjects

LETTER SECOND,



As it forms no part of my plan, I shall decline entering into any history of the East India Company's Monopoly. It will be sufficient to observe, that it was established at a time when the principles of Commerce were but ill understood, and has been continued partly from prejudice and partly from supposed necessity. When the question of exclusive trade came to be mingled with that of the Company's territorial sovereignty, the class of politicians who are always averse to any alteration in long established usages, even although they should be proven to be bad, were appalled at the very notion of a change; and although they acknowledged and approved of a system of commercial freedom GENERALLY, yet rejected this measure, when coupled with such a companion. At length, the extent of territory has become so great, and the task of legislating for, and governing, such a numerous population, so complex, that these politicians confidently pre-



dict nothing less than the irrecoverable loss of all our Indian possessions, if the exclusive charter of the Company be allowed to expire, and a system of free trade permitted, thus mingling the question of exclusive trade with one with which it has no absolute concern. There is no positive necessity for considering the territorial administration of the Company and their exclusive trade as one question. The former may remain with them, under some modification, (and I for one sincerely hope it may so remain,) and the latter be restored, as it is his right, to every British subject.

It is, I believe, generally acknowledged, that such a Monopoly as that of the commercial one of the East India Company, is injurious to the general interests of the country where it is established, except in one doubtful case, and that is, in the instance of a new country, where capital has not accumulated in the hands of individuals sufficient to enable them to engage in precarious and remote adventures; although this exception is, in some measure, disproved by the practice of America, whose merchants engross, and chiefly by British capital, a great proportion of Indian trade*. The provisions of the excluding

* This must be taken with some limitation. It was certainly true, at the time America was allowed first to participate in

were often directed by the paternal vigilance of our Legislature to prevent individual ruin. There is now, however, any very great necessity now for the exertion in such an over-weening care, in preventing people from ruining themselves. Give them liberty and protection, and leave the result to the unfettered operation of individual interest. If it is a losing trade, it will soon, as it ought to be, be voluntarily relinquished; if otherwise, abundance of capital and enterprise will be found in the country to carry it on.

When it began to be doubted if the trade of the Company was a saving trade, it was asserted, that it was merely a trade of remittance of the surplus revenue of India. It is now, however, pretty clear, that since 1798 they have had no surplus revenue to remit; *but an actual deficiency of a million and a half annually*, as exhibited by the papers laid before Parliament. This, however, may doubtless be charged to the expenses

this trade; but the case is now widely different. The really American Capital, at present embarked in this traffic, is immense. If I were at liberty, I could mention one Citizen, from a insignificant sea-port of the United States, little better than a fishing town, who employs a capital of three hundred thousand pounds, at least, in the Indian commerce, in which it has been chiefly acquired; and many examples of a similar nature might be produced.

of Government, and not to trade. But, from the Report of the Company's Affairs, laid before Parliament in 1805, it appears that they actually lose on the balance of exports and imports; of course, it may be on the whole a losing trade also, and one which, with reference to itself, they ought not to continue.

But, although the Company lose, it does not follow that individual merchants would do so. Their shipping establishment is on the most magnificent and expensive scale—their ships constructed and equipped for the double purpose of trade and defence, and well appointed in officers and men. The former, to the great credit of the Company, are not surpassed in professional skill by any in the world—uniting scientific knowledge with great practical experience—and trained to perform the most difficult nautical manœuvres with the greatest economy of hands. Such officers would be a useful acquisition, in the event of the trade being thrown open, to every sea-port town in the kingdom. The extra expense of such an establishment would be, of course, saved to the individual merchant, as also that of the port-officers, inspectors, surveyors, masters attendant, deputies, &c, unnecessary in a free trade.

FETTERED the Company are, in the mode of bringing their concerns to sale, it is not likely that the most is made of them. The time and manner of sale are regulated by Act of Parliament, and may take place when least calculated to insure the best price. Their necessities too, of late years, may have compelled them to include in their sales articles but little in demand, on which a great loss would necessarily be incurred.

In fine, mercantile matters are always better managed by one than by many; and peculiar circumstances, already noticed, induce the belief, that the maxim is fully as applicable to the Company's Commercial Corporation, as to any other public body whatever.

LETTER THIRD.

From the days of Da-Gama downwards, the Asiatic dominions have been considered as mines of wealth, by every nation of Europe, and each has accordingly endeavoured to engross the largest share to itself: and, what is not very usual in competition, by precisely the same means—by exclusive companies, royal charters, &c.—certainly not the most effectual way of turning the wealth of India to the best account. The English, at length, by the effect of a mere naval superiority, and not from acting on any superlatively enlightened views, have acquired the sole dominion, political and commercial, of this envied portion of the globe, with an exception or two, scarcely worth mentioning. The questions will, therefore, be—What are the causes which render the Indian trade so much an object of desire to the states of Europe? And now that this darling object

is entirely to our disposition, how it may be managed so as to produce the greatest possible benefit?

The answer to the former has been, in some measure, anticipated; and is in some measure, unnecessary. The productions of India are generally known, and are become absolutely requisite to the gratification of European wants and desires. By this admission, the *demand* for Indian products is acknowledged; and this leads to the second inquiry, viz. By what *means* is this demand to be most effectually supplied? The main question, to which every thing past has been a mere introduction, and a question not of a very easy solution.

It has been strongly maintained, even by parties friendly to a free trade, that no effectual demand for European Manufactures can ever obtain in India, and its dependencies, except among European settlers—at once, a motive and apology for universal subjugation. This, however, is far from being the case. Among the Hindoos, to be sure, whose simple wants are limited to their own productions, and those too, but few, the allegation will apply; but to the rest of the population, less under the controul of religious prejudices and positive sumptuary

institutions, to such objection will answer. It may be said, that with the exception of European settlers and Hindoos, the whole population beyond the Cape is in a state of savagery, or but little removed from it. Grant this—what is the consequence? Why, by trading freely and frequently with them, by mingling and associating with them, you humanize their manners, and make them exactly what you wish them to be—a people possessing desires similar to your own. Eighteen centuries have not elapsed since a Roman annalist described the Attacotti, the inhabitants of the very spot which we inhabit, whose blood probably runs in our veins, as a race of *Annibals*; much further removed from civilization than any of the Asiatic races, however mortifying such a consideration may be to our national vanity. Let us, therefore, instead of conquering and pillaging them, as Europeans have too frequently done, endeavour to better their condition, by communicating the arts of civilized life; and posterity, if not we ourselves, will reap the benefit of it.

But it is not true, although it has been admitted, that the population beyond the Cape, with the above exceptions, is savage. The Arabs, who, above a thousand years ago, gave laws and literature to, at least, a part of three quarters of the

globe, are far from being barbarous. A sufficient indication of which is, the extent of their trade. Their ships are coming in all directions along the shores of India, many of them of large dimensions, and not unskilfully managed. In the small seaport of Cannonore, on the Malabar coast, six to eight Arab vessels, from 100 to 250 tons, may be found anchored at once, and chiefly consigned to one Black merchant. Their trade, indeed, extends to every part of India, and is far from being insignificant. It would be humbling enough to the boastful pretensions of the Chinese, to be considered as a nation of barbarians; and, I dare say, the devout *Musselmén* of Hindostan, would be apt to retort the imputation of savagism, on such profligate slanderers of the sanctity of the Kaaba. The Burman empire, according to Col. Symes, has made great progress in civilization, and its inhabitants acquired habits of useful industry, while they enjoy the means of making it infinitely productive. I would, indeed, question, if the abandoned population of Borauey Bay, would not rather choose to be axed with the most atrocious breaches of moral duty, than with a want of refinement; which the very circumstances of their banishment would disprove—being for crimes chiefly incident to an advanced state of society. The inhabitants of the Archipelago, including the large islands of Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, &c. from

their intercourse with European settlers, are advancing in knowledge, and acquiring a desire for almost every production of art suitable to their climate; and nothing can so effectually tend to increase those desires, as to show them the possibility of gratifying them. The mixed population too of India, is immense. The descendants of European males and native females, whom the policy of a late Right Honourable Traveller would consign to everlasting banishment from every part of the British possessions, though endeared to them as the place of their nativity, and for no crime, but that defect of character, which their accidental place in society generates—that vigilant and almost undeviating exclusion to which they are subjected as individuals, and the privations and disabilities they suffer, as citizens—a system which has always produced similar effects, wherever it has been practised—these with the Portuguese and their descendants, form a mass of population, from Malacca to Surat, great in point of numbers; but, from the above circumstances, and some others, weak and inefficient, but which a more liberal policy might remedy.

LETTER FOURTH



Among the places, beyond the Cape, capable of being turned to advantage by British capital and adventure, I would instance the Island of Madagascar, a name scarcely heard of, although the voyage round it might be made from this port in six months. The southern part of the island is about a fortnight's easy sail N. E. of the Cape, is in length near a thousand miles N. to S. and in breadth about three hundred. The Bay of St. Augustin, on the S. W. side of the island, is an excellent and capacious harbour, but badly supplied with water, except by proceeding a considerable way up the river, and filling at quarter flood; at which time the water is least brackish. The island is intersected by a range of mountains, which, it is said, abound in precious minerals. It is, in general, a perfect garden for fertility, producing almost every thing by the very simple

operation of stirring the surface, periodically, with a forked stick. Ebony, various dye-woods, and vast abundance of gums and resins, with aromatic and medicinal herbs, are found here in profusion. Flax, and hemp of a very superior quality, are produced, together with tobacco, indigo, silk, and cotton. But, the arts of rendering these articles useful are little known among the simple inhabitants. The sugar cane is likewise uncommonly large and juicy, a foot of cane having been found to weigh 1½ lb. Wax, honey, and ambergris, may also be procured in great quantities. Provisions, viz. rice and cattle, are abundant. They want, in return, muskets, powder, ball, &c. beads, and every instrument of iron and steel; pullicate handkerchiefs, and every species of cotton goods, and not *unusually* rum. The population was commonly rated at four millions: but the French officers, who traversed the island in 1791, say, it *certainly* contains above two millions; and the appearances about the coast justify this assertion: it might, indeed, be infinitely greater were it not for their inhuman practice of infanticide on those born on what they choose to call unlucky days. Such a population, with hospitable and social habits, lively good-natured dispositions, and, withal, having a strong propensity to truck and barter with their European visitors, to mingle with their society,

and even to imitate their manners, might, with little aid, be trained to more useful arts and rational pleasures, as regard themselves, and made to contribute more effectually to the wants and amusements of others.

THOSE of the inhabitants, about St. Augustin, who have acquired a smattering of English, are remarkably fond of titles of distinction. The sailors accordingly have, with great liberality, exhausted the whole British peerage in ennobling their naked favourites, who assume all the airs of greatness, and seem as much satisfied with their proud pre-eminence, as any Knight of the Bath. *

* Two of these *sansculotte* worthies came on board one of the Company's ships, one had been, on a former occasion, created, "Lord Anson;" the other was "unhonoured." The latter, however, before he left the ship, begged the peerage, with great earnestness, of the boatswain, who, with corresponding solemnity, made him "Duke of Marlborough." The new-made Duke could not resist pledging his friends at grog time, and being of a social turn, drank rather more liberally than a prudent Peer would have ventured on. This, with the intoxication of his new honours, raised his self-importance to such an unreasonable pitch, that in going ashore, he quarrelled with his less dignified companion, and, without much ceremony, struck him across the back with his paddle. The insulted Anson was not so much disposed to passive obedience, as the imaginary distinction of the rank of the other seemed to require, and with great agility and utter disregard of the Ducal dignity, levelled a blow at the aggressor, which laid him sprawl-

THAT no settlements have been made among them, save that of the French at Dauphin, has been owing almost entirely to the treachery of that people, who made pactions with this simple people, but to break them; and introduced among them the horrid traffic in slaves, formerly unknown. The cruelties of the French were, at length, the means of their extirpation, although they attribute their abandonment of the island, to the untameable savagism of the natives, whose habits never could be brought to assimilate to those of their oppressors; but which the testimony of every one disproves, with whom I have conversed on the subject, who has had opportunities of being among them. Since that time, no attempt has been made to recover their lost possessions.

I HUMBLY conceive, an advantageous barter might be established, between this people and the British, if no attempt is made to conquer them. An exchange of commodities is, however, all that could be expected for a considerable time. Except the adventitious circulation of the nations whose people visit the island, no currency, that

ing, and gave him such an unmerciful pummeling as had well nigh put an end to the life and titles of Marlborough together. The Duke was so much ashamed of this rencontre that he never after visited the ship.

deserves the name, exists. The want of a circulating medium would therefore be greatly felt, without the substitution of an artificial paper currency. This defect would, however, in process of time be remedied, by frequency of intercourse, by improvement in all the arts of life, and by gradual, but peaceable, colonization. A labourer cannot increase his skill in a day, nor can a waste be brought into cultivation in years; but time and example will effect both. And to circulate their productions, a suitable medium will be found. The iron money of Sparta, would soon have been succeeded by a more convenient instrument of commerce, but for the sumptuary laws of Lycurgus.

LETTER FIFTH.

THE Act which first effectually secured to the East India Company their Monopoly, was the Stat. 9th and 10 h, William III. c. 44, which, though it has been frequently subjected to partial alterations and modifications, remains still unrepealed by any subsequent statute; and any infraction of its enactment by British ships or subjects is, at this moment, illegal. Such parts, however, as inflicted penalties on those invading the Charter of Monopoly were repealed by the Stat. 33d, George III. c. 52, which, *inter alia*, authorized foreigners to buy, sell, and export from India, provided such exportation did not interfere with, or was struck at by, the navigation laws; and permitted British subjects residing there to act as factors and agents for foreigners carrying on such trade.

As more matter of bargain between the British Government and a portion of its subjects, the British nation would have had comparatively little reason to complain of the exclusive Charter, obtained by the Company, had the exclusion been of universal operation,—comprehending foreigners of every description in common with its own subjects. But this is by no means the case; invidious exceptions are made, and these exceptions are, with justice, the chief subjects of complaint and jealousy.

It is justly remarked, by Hume, in his *Essays on the jealousy of trade*, that “where an open communication is preserved among nations, it is impossible but the domestic industry of every one must receive an increase from the improvements of the others.” That distinguished writer, however, had in view an unreserved and entire communication; in which point of view the truth of the maxim is indisputable, but the commercial policy of this country, for no very sufficient reason which I can perceive, permits its application only half-way; and, as if it were to be feared that the domestic industry of India might become exorbitant, by too free an intercourse, Americans are allowed almost entire liberty of trade, while British subjects are allowed no trade at all, except through the medium of the Company.

By the treaty concluded in 1795, between the United States and Great Britain, it is stipulated, that the ships of the former, shall be freely admitted to the ports and harbours of the British dominions in India, to trade therein, and that it is not necessary that such trade shall be carried on between America and India direct, but that it may be conducted circuitously by Europe, and by British subjects naturalized in America. They are, however, prohibited the coasting trade of India; but the prohibition does not extend to the carrying their original cargoes, from one port to another. Under the sanction of this Act, American ships swarm in the Indian ocean, and crowd every port of the Asiatic dominions, carrying on a lucrative trade with the colony of a country, whose own natural-born subjects are barred all participation in. We have the authority of the Court of Directors themselves, for stating, that the total amount of the Imports to British India, in bullion and merchandise by the Company for seven years, ending 1808, was £10,486,629 sterling, while that of Americans and Foreign Europeans, amounted for the same period to £8,335,369, or near about four fifths of what the Company themselves imported. The Company's exports in goods alone, amounted for the same period to £8,108,897 sterling, and those of foreign Europeans and Americans, to £7,241,035,

or little more of seven eighths of the Company. Thus are British merchants deprived of a trade to the extent of about £1,200,000 a year almost equal to that of the Company, and of which they cannot possibly avail themselves, but which our Legislature unaccountably permits Aliens to engross, to the utter exclusion of British subjects. I can farther state, that I myself have seen, within the short space of three months, eight or nine American ships, none of them less than 300 tons burthen, clear out from the single port of Calcutta alone. And what return do they make for this boon? Why, for this act of preference they repay us with the vilest ingratitude.—Not an expedition was ever planned by any of the Indian governments—not an armament was fitted out, or a fleet sailed from an Indian port, but these licensed Aliens, became the vehicles of information to the French Governors at Mauritius, (intentionally or otherwise I know not,) who benefited largely by their underground communications; to which the writer at one time had nearly fallen a victim, together with hundreds more, whose lives or captivity were of greater importance. It was indeed, at one particular time, suspected, that this was not the least lucrative part of their *trade* in these seas, whatever foundation there might have been for such a suspicion; that source has, however, recently failed them, by the capture of the Isle of France.

It has been remarked, in considering the state of the world at the time this address was made, our Government had a picture of a civilized America; this, however, has long ceased to avail them; and the Americans, regardless of their true interests, like other great babies, are set about quarrelling with their nurse, discharging at her every species of abuse, and splitting her ears with their vociferous imbecility, unmindful alike of the obligations they owe to the source of their existence, and to the maternal hand that conducted them through infancy and childhood, to their present advanced state of nonage—where we must for the present leave them.

LETTER SIXTH.

Among the ancients, and even down to a very late period, the trade of India has been considered entirely as a trade of luxury, as carried on with European nations. The chief articles of commerce were, therefore, such as nations far advanced in refinement could alone have any demand for, such as precious stones, pearls, aromatics, silk, and the finer manufactures of cotton. The chief commodity exported in return for these articles, and for which there existed the greatest demand, was silver. The productions of Europe are still but little in request by the nations of India; and indeed no part of the world depends so little on foreign countries for either necessities or luxuries. This peculiarity may be ascribed partly to the influence of the Hindoo religion, which forbids the use of almost every luxury, and particu-

larly that of the table, if any defiled by the unhallowed hands of christians—partly to the long established customs and habits—and partly to the blessings of a fertile soil, and favourable

* Any person who has ever been among this singular race of people, must have observed many instances of their unconquerable obduracy in this particular. The writer will be pardoned for quoting *one* or *two*, among many, which his observation has furnished.

The Sircar (book-keeper,) of an officer belonging to one of the Company's ships, had occasion to visit him on board, while lying in Saugor roads, (at the mouth of the Hoogly, near 100 miles below Calcutta,) ready for sea. During his stay, it came on to blow very hard, so that no boat could venture alongside the ship, consequently he was left without the means of escape ashore, and had not wherewithal to satisfy his hunger, on board, save what had been necessarily touched by the undevout hands of christians. In this dilemma he was kept twenty-four hours, during which time, he neither eat nor drank. In the extremity of hunger he was repeatedly urged to eat some plantains, abundance of which hung over the stern, and to palliate this breach of religious duty, he was told, he might do it at a time when no one could perceive him; but he manfully resisted the temptation. It is possible he might have allowed himself to perish a martyr to this absurd prejudice; but the gale abating, prevented such an issue to the experiment.

The writer and two young Cadets were proceeding from one of the Company's ships in Saugor roads to Calcutta, in an open native boat, and expecting to fetch Diamond harbour with the first tide, the wind being favourable, they neglected to

climate, producing every thing that simple man
 can live on by his own resources. In late years, however,
 the trade has acquired a very different character.
 The exports from India, and particularly from
 China, are now viewed among us as much in the
 light of necessities as the productions of our own
 soil.—What substitute could we obtain, for in-
 stance, for tea, for nutmegs, or for pepper?—
 yet these were considered, by our ancestors, as
 articles we could do very well without. Silver is
 still a commodity greatly in demand in India,
 owing to the causes above enumerated, together
 with the absence of mines of that metal, but much

take any sort of provision with them. The wind, however,
 shifted before, they could reach the narrow part of the river;
 the tide left them, and night came on, when there was no al-
 ternative, but to attempt to return to the ship, or to anchor.
 The latter was resorted to, although the calls of hunger be-
 came very pressing, and this was no situation to have them sa-
 tisfied. The boatman, who had been long absent from shore,
 had only two handfuls of rice, which he very humanely agreed
 to boil and share with them. When the repast was prepared,
 one of the young gentlemen, very innocently, as he imagined,
 thrust his knife into the rice boiler, in order to fore-taste his
 expected feast; but, alas! this rash proceeding was fatal to the
 entertainment; for no sooner was the sacred vessel polluted
 by his profane touch, than over-board it was pitched, toge-
 ther with its contents, by its indignant owner, to the great
 mortification and disappointment of all parties, and to none
 more so than the innocent cause of the catastrophe.

loss so than formerly. This change has been brought about by a great increase in European population, which has introduced the practice of substituting a more artificial and cheaper circulating medium for that of the precious metals, and other financial improvements, which diminish the uses of coin; and has also produced a greater demand for the commodities of Europe, to satisfy the wants and gratify the taste of those whose habits and tastes are still European. These changes, therefore, which have gradually taken place, in the commerce with India, have been, on the whole, favourable to Europe, by the increased demand for the productions of India in Europe, and by the increase of the exports, in return for these productions. We ought next to consider, whether this change has been accompanied by a corresponding alteration in the commercial policy of Britain, (which is now, in point of fact, *European*, so far as India is concerned,) so as the trade may be turned to the best possible advantage.

To avoid repetition, I must here beg my readers to refer to what was said in my first letter on Monopoly in general, and to the books there quoted; and also to what was stated relative to the Company's revenue, of which their trade was *once* said to be merely the remittance. But, alas! this golden dream, this flattering solace

can no longer satisfy or amuse us. It is now
 proven to have been an unprofitable pageant—
 not one farthing of revenue has there been to re-
 mit for these many years; but, on the contrary,
 millions have been required, from England, to
 fill up the waste occasioned by a protracted and
 desolating warfare, in extending possessions, which,
 to be secure, ought to be universal; and when
 acquired will not repay the expense of conquest.
 As to the profits of the Company's trade, I fear
 they are nearly as unsubstantial as the revenue.
 By the papers and accounts laid before Parlia-
 ment in 1805, although the gain on imports were
 considerable, yet were they more than balanced,
 by the loss on exports, (which is not to be won-
 dered at, when it is considered, that the chief arti-
 cles of export are bulky commodities, on which
 the charges of transportation are proportionally
 high to their value,) for which we have the avowal
 of the Directors themselves, that they "export
 with a loss," purely, as they say, to encourage
 manufactures; but really, in compliance with the
 statute, to stop the mouths of those who would
 otherwise be disposed to clamour against the Mo-
 nopoly, and the necessity they are under of ex-
 porting *something* to supply their own wants, and
 provide their home investments.

By the aid of some dexterity in figures, of which

the Hon. Court of Directors and themselves, it is almost impossible to separate the Territorial from the Commercial part of the India Budget, so as to be able to state precisely, the losses or gains on cash, distinctly, so artificially or necessarily are they blended together. Still so much may be gleaned as will go near to satisfy us, that by their *trade*, they gain nothing; and indeed, it is the universal belief among all well informed persons, both in India and at home, that were it not for the China Trade, the balance of loss would be great yearly. That they do lose as it is, has been averred by Lord Lauderdale, in his Inquiry, who gives the authority of the Directors themselves for the truth of his averment, and my own scanty observation, (which my readers may probably trust but little to,) confirms my belief of the correctness of his Lordship's assertion in this, although I would not pledge myself to follow his *reasoning* in other parts of that ingenious work. If, therefore, their Monopoly produces nothing but loss to the Company themselves, or, at least, no gain; would it not be as well to abandon it, to those who would either turn it to advantage, or discontinue it altogether, particularly, as it is now understood pretty well, and as stated above, that they have had no balance of *revenue* to remit in any shape, for these many years past. So far, therefore, as regards the Company, the relinquishment

of their trade, ~~and~~ rather to be an advantage to them, than a hardship. But what will be said, if it can be shown, that the entire British Empire suffers by the exclusive trade, and would gain infinitely by its abandonment.

It will not be difficult to show, that whatever may be its effects abroad, the Monopoly at *home* is directly against every one unconnected with the Company, and who require the productions, which are the objects of its traffic. Notwithstanding Legislative interference in the time and mode of conducting Sales, the Monopoly has still a decided tendency to keep up the price of goods, by its power of creating an artificial scarcity of them.—The Directors, however, inform us, that it is by their imports alone they gain any thing, and that through them the country largely participates in this gain; an inference that scarcely any but a friend to the Monopoly would venture on: for it seems quite clear to me, that whatever wealth the Monopoly enables them to draw from their imports, (and it alone is the cause of enabling them to sell higher, than under a free trade,) it must be drained from the pockets of their countrymen, and from them alone. This is communicating *gains* with a vengeance! “Call you that, backing your friends? *A plague on such backing!*”

By a Free Trade, the exports for some time might not greatly increase, but they would be turned to better account, while the profits on the imports would be regulated by the demand, and the extent of competition in supplying it. Moreover, the Trade would be more beneficially diffused, in such ports, and in such quantities and proportions, as their respective wants required. Thus saving the whole expense of inland conveyance, from the London Market, besides brokerage, and other incidental charges, which usually add greatly to the value of Indian productions, before they can be brought to their final place of consumption.

IN my next, I shall humbly endeavour to point out the peculiar advantages of a Free Trade, to this City.

LETTER SEVENTH.

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In following me through this tedious detail, my patient reader will, doubtless, have perceived an evident leaning towards one side of this question, viz. that of a free trade, which circumstance may excite a suspicion among many, of the soundness of my conclusions; unless it can be shown, that they proceeded from facts which came under my own observation, or which can be fairly substantiated. My intentions were fully developed in the First Letter, and those certainly were *not* to write *in favour* of the Monopoly; but, at the same time, I am not aware of having throughout aggravated any fact, or bent any reasoning, to favour the opinions which I myself might choose to hold on this subject. I humbly profess myself a partizan, but should deeply regret, if such a profession could by any means, or in any degree, tempt me to a violation either of truth or consist-

ency. I shall, therefore, in the discussion of the remains of this subject—a discussion probably the most interesting to my readers—endeavour to confine myself to such circumstances as came under my own observation, or which can be corroborated by the experience of others.

THAT the port of Glasgow is *naturally* calculated for the Trade of India, and still more so, from the demands of its manufactures, I conceive it will not be difficult to show. A vessel sailing from the Clyde, in the month of April, or even May, has, at least, an *equal* chance of a North-easterly wind, to carry her into the Trades; if so, by going large through the Southern Trade, and standing well to the Southward, when she falls in with variable winds, she has every chance of being off the Cape in seven to eight weeks, at which time she will have the wind blowing strong at West, or within two points either way, provided she keep a high Southern latitude (about 37 deg. or 38 deg.) This wind will carry her as far as 75 deg. E. long. when it will be time to haul up for the Bay of Bengal, if proceeding thither, and after encountering a few days' baffling winds, under the line, she will fall in with the regular Monsoon, in about 5° deg. N. and reach Madras in about seven weeks more—or three months and twenty days from the Clyde. From thence to the Sand,

Heads, at the entrance of the Hoogly, or Bengal river, the distance may be run down in five days, at this season, or any time before the middle of October, when the Monsoon shifts.—Thus, if the ship leaves the Clyde on the first of May, she may reach Calcutta by the 25th or 30th August, (touching at Madras, may detain her a few days longer,) allow her the whole of September and October, to dispose of her outward, and provide her homeward cargo. She sails again on the first of November, with the first of the North-east Monsoon, which carries her as far 4 or 5 degrees North latitude. In about ten degrees South, she falls in with a trade, which carries her well to the Westward, and near 28 deg. S. About the middle of December, she doubles the Cape of Good Hope, with light variable winds, and, generally at this season, moderate weather. Here she may water, and if no accident occur, may reach the Clyde about the latter end of March, or beginning of April; making the voyage round in less than eleven months, and if little repair is wanted, may be again ready to sail in May. That this calculation has not been assumed hypothetically, or from doubtful data, the writer can assure his readers, (if his own bare assertion will suffice,) that he has, more than once, made the passage out from Portsmouth within three months and twenty-five days, and that too, with a large fleet of Indiamen,

which is generally put under easy sail during the night, to avoid separation; and the passage home from Bengal in four months, deducting the time lost at St. Helena, which, in time of war, is always considerable.

ANOTHER advantage which the local situation of Clyde affords, ought not to be passed over without notice, on this occasion. During the months of March and April, it is very well known, that East and North Easterly winds prevail in the British seas, so that a vessel arriving on the coast, at this season, runs every chance of being tossed about for weeks, in attempting to beat up Channel, or of being reduced to the necessity of bearing up for some port in Ireland; probably Galway Bay, or the river Shannon, there to wait a favourable change, and, perhaps, when such change occurs, and the vessel puts to sea, she is a second time driven back. This, the writer himself has experienced, when, after beating about off the west of Ireland a considerable time, a partial shift of wind to the S. W. enabled the vessel to make up Channel, as far as the Start Point.—Again it chopt round to the North-East, and blew with increased violence, forcing the vessel to bear up a second time, and run into Plymouth Sound, where she lay a fortnight. Whereas, had she been bound for the Clyde, she would have got



safe into Greenock, nearly within the time, she took to make the Start, and thus saved a fortnight's time, another passage, and much tear and wear.

It may also be noticed, that it is by no means necessary ships in this service should be of extraordinary dimensions. A smart vessel of about 400 tons, well found, manned and armed sufficiently, to match a small privateer, is probably as useful a size as any that could be adopted, if carefully constructed. Such vessels frequently make better sea boats than ships of the largest dimensions, and are less expensive in maintaining. They would also have this advantage, that in Bengal they could proceed to the very town of Calcutta, without discharging a single ton of cargo, whereas the Indiamen load and unload at Diamond Harbour, 50 miles below that city, filling up at Saugor, near 100 miles from the same place, at an incalculable expense of freight, and considerable risk of loss, \*

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\* It might have been worth while to have taken into account, the mighty risk of Navigating the British Channel, which ships trading to the Clyde, will always avoid.—I can enumerate, at least, six fine Indiamen lost on this dangerous coast, since the year 1799 or 1800, besides many lives, and property to the extent of several hundred thousands sterling,

HAVING thus, with as much brevity as possible, and with as much minuteness of detail as my plan afforded, pointed out a few of the advantages which nature has bestowed on the Port of Clyde, so far as mere *navigating* is concerned, it now remains, that I direct my readers to the capabilities afforded to a free trade to India, from the nature of the manufactures, the spirit and enterprise of the merchants, and the extent of capital of Glasgow and its subsidiary ports, ready to be employed in any new undertaking which may afford a chance of success; and which will, close my very humble, and perhaps very tedious, trespasses on public indulgence.

## LETTER EIGHTH.



HAVING in a former letter, humbly attempted to point out to you some of the natural, or physical capabilities of the port of Clyde, for a trade with India, I now take leave to direct your attention to those factitious advantages, which the extent of population, the state of society, and, above all, the establishment of extensive manufactories, bestow. —The latter, as the medium of consumption of East India commodities, almost unequalled in Britain. \*

ON a former occasion I ventured a few remarks, in order to remove the apprehensions of those who think that from the similarity of productions, the trade of India could be of little advantage to Glasgow; but lest the arguments of an anonymous letter writer may fail of producing the required effect, I must beg to call in the aid of Mr.

Hume, an authority which will probably have more weight with my readers, and which is at all events, in a speculation of this nature, more deserving of regard. That profound writer, in his Essay on the jealousy of Trade, has the following remark.—“ Nature by giving a diversity of geniuses, climates, and soils, to different nations, has secured their mutual intercourse and commerce, as long as they all remain industrious and civilized. Nay, the more the arts increase in any state, the more will be its demands from its industrious neighbours. But what if a nation has any staple commodity? Must not the interfering of our neighbours in that Manufacture be a loss to us? I answer, that, when any commodity is denominated the staple of a kingdom, it is supposed that this kingdom has some peculiar and natural advantages for raising the commodity; and, if, notwithstanding these advantages, they lose such a manufacture, they ought to blame their own idleness, or bad government, not the industry of their neighbours.” —And again,—“ we need not apprehend that all the objects of industry will be exhausted, or that our manufactures, while they remain on an equal footing with those of our neighbours, will be in danger of wanting employment. *The emulation among rival nations serves rather to keep industry alive in all of them.*” This passage of Hume will not be hastily questioned, particularly, as the truth of it has been illustrated by the prac-

tice of almost all commercial countries, where  
 freedom has been established. But it is not true  
 that the exchangeable commodities of this coun-  
 try and India are so much alike. Do we not re-  
 quire large supplies of indigo, and does not In-  
 dia afford us these supplies? In drugs, gums, and  
 resins, the demand of this district of the empire  
 is very great, and from India chiefly, are these  
 commodities received, and, indeed, must be re-  
 ceived, as no other spot in the world produces  
 them, at least in sufficient quantities for the exist-  
 ing demand. Scarcely is there a manufactory es-  
 tablished in or about Glasgow, where the products  
 of India do not enter into some part of its proce-  
 ses, and in many are indispensably requisite. But  
 the article of most universal consumption, and to  
 the greatest extent, is tea; and which no part of  
 the world but Asia can supply us with. The quantity  
 of tea annually consumed in this district of Scotland  
 must be immense; perhaps greater than that of  
 any equal proportion of population in the British  
 dominions. When it is considered, that here even  
 the very beggars drink this beverage \*, and per-

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\* The notice of this circumstance suggests an apparent pa-  
 radox in economy. In this country those who live by begging  
 alone regale themselves daily with tea, whereas in China, a class  
 in society at least one degree above them, viz. labourers, where  
 the article is produced, and the price not above one-third of  
 what it is here, cannot afford to taste of that luxury but on  
 very rare occasions. Their ordinary meals being rice boiled

of all ages and of every condition; whereas in England, the more ordinary liquid in use among the male population is beer, and especially among tradesmen and mechanics, who with us limit their desires to at least a more harmless substitute. Taking the consumption of Britain at twenty million pounds annually\*, that of Scotland would, at least be equal to eighteen hundred or two thousand tons, at the most moderate computation. The proportion even of this one article to the trade of Glasgow would be a most favourable augmentation; and without taking to account what might be re-exported. Still it may be urged, that although we may be partially benefited by freedom of importation of the articles we daily consume, yet the advantage will be but trifling, unless we can make a return for such importations, by the export of our own manufactures.

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and seasoned with curried offals, or esculent vegetables. The paradox may be partly explained by a comparison of the relative difference between the ordinary products of the soil and daily food, of the two countries, and articles of luxury. In China rice is abundant every where, and tea is cultivated, to any extent, in one or two provinces only. In this country the difference in value between a breakfast of bread and tea (such as is used by beggars) and one of any other article of food in use among us, is but small.

\* This is far below the actual amount.

If we import at all, we must, in some shape or other, give an equivalent for the articles imported, either in goods or the precious metals. For the former, I ventured to assert, in a previous letter, there would always exist a demand to a certain extent, which would regulate itself by the nature and circumstances of Government encouraging, or otherwise, to the free exertion of population, of capital, and of industry. When our goods cease to be in demand, our equivalent will then of necessity be either silver or gold, which we must purchase of some other nation, to enable us to export it, and for which we must pay in goods. So that it is a matter of little importance, whether these goods be exchanged directly, for those of India, or indirectly, by exchanging them for dollars, and these last again for the commodities we desire to import: our manufactures being, in both cases, the ultimate payment.

At some period, perhaps not very distant, the Continent of South America will mightily promote the objects of a Free Trade to India, from its presenting a convenient stage, in an outward bound voyage—the demand that exists for our manufactures, and the supply of the precious metals, which an East India Trade would at least for a time require. From the little that I have

seen of that fine, but misguided country," I had formed the most favourable opinion of its capabilities, if moral circumstances, coupled with the absurd and flagitious policy of its Government, did not rather encourage and promote habits, the very reverse of those, which conduct a people from idleness to industry, from the most servile of all bondage to freedom, and from imbecility to exalted power. Her energies, after being cramped for ages in cruel and ignoble servitude, are probably now destined to receive a quickening impulse, and a new direction, which will urge her forward in the way of improvement, to a distinguished place among the nations of the world, for which the singular bounties of nature seem to have destined her, and which the undeviating folly, and wickedness of her cruel oppressors, shall not (I hope) be permitted to restrain.

By a very recent treaty of our Ministry with the Prince Regent of the Brazils, if I am not mistaken, we are expressly barred from carrying between that Principality and India. A more enlightened policy would have dictated a different arrangement, but we were thankful, it seems, for any sort of treaty with these *very Carthagenians*, glad to be admitted to their alliance on any terms: it would therefore evince the blackest and most malevolent



ingratitude, "to look the 'gift horse' in the mouth."

Being now near the close of my humble intrusions on public patience\*, a trespass, which I hope, most of my readers will pardon, I cannot avoid expressing my satisfaction at the success of my undertaking. All that I ever intended, or could presume on, was to direct public attention to a subject, and to a quarter of the Globe, little thought or talked of. In this I have happily succeeded, and more, I had not the vanity to calculate on. An anticipation of the effects of different maxims and institutions, which so great a change might require and induce, I must leave to those, whose leisure and attainments more eminently qualify them for such an undertaking. It is not for me to legislate for sixty millions of subjects, or propose plans for the government of such an immense empire. I will only venture to say, that it does not appear to me as indispensibly necessary, that the mode of government should be substantially altered, although the trade were thrown open. Of the rectitude of intention, and ever just and enlightened views, of the Honoura-

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\* It will be observed, that this letter was intended to be the last—subsequent events, however, induced the writer to make some additions.

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the Court of Directors, no one will entertain a doubt, inwards as they frequently are by the Board of Control; and of the singular liberality, ability, strict honour, and integrity of their servants abroad, generally speaking, every one will readily acknowledge, who has ever been among them, so that if faults exist, they must be imputed to the system, not to its administrators\*.

WHEN the merciless tyranny of a second Attila is ravaging the largest and finest portion of Europe, when his cruel and capricious edicts, are threatening to replunge the countries subjected to his sway into ignorance and savagism—when every step he takes is followed by desolation and misery, and commerce reduced to a mere name—this is not a time for us to cling to the last remaining shackle on our industry; and to aid his views by

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\* From authority which I cannot discredit, and owing to circumstances purely political, I have (17th Oct. 1811,) now every reason to believe, that the Charter of the Company will be renewed, with some trifling modifications, unless very boldly opposed by the independent members, backed by the importunities of the merchants of the out-ports, who have the deepest interest in the abolition, or continuance of the Monopoly; and it is apprehended, this is not the juncture for them to contend successfully, with such a powerful body of supporters, as the friends of the Company can marshal. Discussion, however, will be of use, by preparing the public mind for future and perhaps more successful attempts.

the pertinacity of our adherence to a system, so much like that which is the daily object of his policy. Political and Commercial freedom, has in all ages been uniformly followed by greatness and opulence; and slavery and restraint, by weakness and poverty. As Greece and Rome became free, they rose in opulence; when they became enslaved, they fell. And such has been the fate of every state, of which we possess any record. And pray God it be not that of Europe also!

THE unnatural and unpromising aspect of the Continent, at this moment, forces upon me a reflection, which, right or wrong, I cannot help entertaining, and which is calculated to lead to rather sorrowful anticipations of the destinies of mankind. States, like individuals, have their infancy, youth, maturity, decay, and fall. The history of the world has been nothing but a series of such events. The Assyrian, Egyptian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman Monarchies, successively rose on the ruins of each other, and successively fell before their more fortunate competitors. Europe, like another Phoenix, rose from the ashes of the Roman Empire, to be the center of every thing great in arts, in science, in morals, and in religion. In following her through the several stages of her progress to her present condition, one cannot help being struck with a parallel between her

and her last predecessor. Both attained to wealth and power, to ease and happiness ; to the possession of every moral and intellectual improvement which sweeten and adorn existence. But these blessings have been abused in both. The character and conduct too of the Modern Dictator, tends to draw the parallel still closer.— From the time of his passing the *Rubicon*, to that of his investiture with the imperial purple, this merciless destroyer of human life and happiness, has unceasingly pursued one line of policy, and secured by every means, the establishment of universal despotism. When it shall please Providence to rid the world of such a scourge, his Generals, like Anthony, Lepidus, and Octavius, may quarrel and may butcher each other ; but there is great reason to fear the system will continue, till the cunning and address of a second Augustus rivet the chains his predecessor had forged, and in Europe, as in Rome, nothing be known of freedom, but the name.

If the superior structure of the British Constitution, the checks which it opposes to the encroachments of arbitrary power, its insular situation, and above all, the superiority in moral and political virtue of its population, shall avert the blow from us, and prevent our sharing a similar fate, we

ought to be singularly careful in avoiding every thing which has a tendency to provoke it. Let us adopt the golden rule, which is of equal application in politics as in morals. to do as we would be done by, not as we are done to. Let us rather give to our enemy the example of forbearance, than oppose him, by imitating his own flagitious policy. Let us guard with equal vigilance against the abuses of liberty, and the approaches of tyranny, giving due encouragement to the dissemination of rational freedom, and the cultivation of patriotic virtue; the best and most effectual bar to every species of corruption—a crime which more easily besets the rulers of wealthy nations, and which their subjects ought vigilantly to detect.

Brutus! be firm! nor let corruption sly  
Twine round your hearts in dissoluble chains!  
The steel of Brutus burst the grosser bonds  
By Caesar cast o'er Rome—but still remain'd  
The soft enchanting fetters of the mind,  
And other Caesars rose. Determin'd, hold  
Your *Independence*; for that once destroyed,  
Unbounded, Freedom is a morning dream,  
That flirts aerial from the sparkling eye.

It has been too much the fashion of late, among true believers in the immutability of the British Constitution, to vilify and abuse every one who could doubt its stability.

Such opinions are most dangerous to the very constitution on which they lavish so much flattery. Such security they may indulge in, while the foundations of it are sapu'd.—“ Nero fiddled while Rome burn'd.”— They may smile, but their country is ruined, if happily she possesses no better patriots. That such a consummation may be long averted, that she may long remain free, prosperous, and happy, is the ardent prayer and wish of,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient devoted servant,

## LETTER NINTH.



When I had last the honour of addressing you on this subject, I adverted shortly to the present state of trade to China, and took occasion to notice the vast and increasing proportion of this trade, which by the operation of the Company's exclusive charter, has been in a manner thrown into the hands of the subjects of the United States of America, who thus enjoy the entire benefit of a lucrative commerce, and that too with British capital, while those who afford them this capital are denied all direct participation in it. I regret to find that my reasonings on this part of the subject have been strangely misapprehended; but I hope, with all humility, I shall be able to show, that the public opinion, as I have heard it expressed, has been

somewhat erroneous, and that wrong conclusions have been made from unquestionable premises.

It has been argued in my hearing, that China is a free and independent nation,—that as such she has the right of trading with whom she pleases,—that we have no right to interfere in the election she may make of trading with America,—that we may make what enactments we please, to prohibit the trade of America with the Company's territory in India, but we cannot interfere with her *own* trade,—and, therefore, that it were *the will of China*, America would trade to an equal extent, although the Company's Charter were abandoned to-morrow. The premises I willingly allow, and never did dispute them, but, in my apprehension, they lead to a very different result. It is not that China and America are friends, and trade with each other, that British merchants complain, but it is of their *own countrymen* they complain, who refuse them a participation in that commerce, which, profitable or otherwise, they conceive to be their natural right; and which, if gainful, America enjoys the whole advantage of, while they ought at least to share it with her. If the trade were open to Britain as well as to America, is it to be doubted, that British capital and enterprise would drive America from a principal part of her carrying trade?—a



trade almost entirely her own, in Chinese commodities, at present: and if any benefit is derived from this trade, will not Britain be the gainer? Besides, although the consumption of British manufactures among this singular people, is but limited, yet, by a judicious policy, might they be gradually weaned from their prejudices in favour of their *modest* countrymen, whose 'proud pre-eminence in all things, must not be questioned by a nation of *watch-makers*\*, as in their lofty humours they choose to designate us, and certainly of the little they do consume we would have the supply. At present, I have no reason to believe,

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\* A few years ago, when a riot by a few drunken sailors interrupted the loading of the Company's ships at Whampoa, Captain Craig of the *Elphinstone*, as Commodore, forwarded an address to the Viceroy, or Emperor, (I forget which,) abundantly crammed with superlatives to *com* Yan-fo. The Viceroy in his answer to this document, in the humility of his heart, told the Commodore, that the British nation were little less than a pack of ungrateful dogs, that by the gracious permission of the Emperor of Emperors, they had become rich and wise, by trading to China, and *they* *withd*; whereas, before, they knew *nothing* but how to *make* war! Yet these are the people who never *dare* venture a fortnight's voyage from their own shores; who without the aid of French or English Ephemerides, cannot calculate an eclipse, or even the most simple of the moon's phases: a country where common honesty is unknown, where infanticide is reduced to a system, and where prime ministers condescend to be flogged at the cart's tail.

that the imports to China by Americans, *exceed* those of the East India Company, exclusive of specie, and no one will deny, that an importation even to this extent, would greatly benefit our merchants, at all times, and more especially at the present. The exact amount of this importation, it will not be easy to ascertain, but I was recently put in possession of a document which may lead to an approximation to such a result, on the authenticity of which I have every reliance, as it came from a quarter not at all liable to suspicion, and indeed where no motive to falsify could exist. By this document it appears, that in little more than a year, ending November, 1810, there had been exported from the Port of Canton, in American bottoms, 12,450 tons of tea, besides porcelain, silks, &c. a quantity equal to the sales of that article at the India House for a twelvemonth. The value of this exportation cannot be estimated at much less than three millions sterling, but call it two millions five hundred thousand, then the next question will be, how was this payment provided for? In what shape was it made?

As the laws of the Chinese empire do not permit colonization, or even the residence of foreigners amongst them, except a few commercial agents, and that only during the season of shipping, together with the absence of all foreign trading con-

nection on the part of the Chinese themselves, it follows, that the facilities which the negotiation of bills of exchange afford to merchants almost every where else, are here barely known. A few bills on England, Bengal, and even America, are sold by Americans, but to no great extent; the chief payments must, therefore, be made in specie, or in goods; the proportions, however, of each, I have no means of ascertaining; but at all events, by both the one and the other, are the Americans likely to be benefited—if, in specie, to procure it, they must barter goods *somewhere*,—if in goods, it is probable a considerable proportion of them have been imported from Britain at a *profit*, so that if the outward investment does not yield much gain; it, at all events, furnishes a capital whereon a large profit arises by the homeward investment. We cannot, however, blame the Americans, for making the most of their China Trade, but we ought to denigrate the policy, which excludes us from all participation in it, whether good or bad; and not only so, but lays us under a *heavy contribution*\*, to maintain the trade in the hands of its present possessors, who, without public aid, would be unable to continue it. Thus furnishing a *moral* to the fable of Pallas and Arachne, with

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\* Loans from Parliament—1808, 1,500,000—1810, 1,500,000—1811, 2,000,000, and probably as much next Session.

this cruel aggravation, that although, like Ovid's Spider, *our bowels* are extracted, we are not, like her, allowed the privilege of *weaving them ourselves*.

DURING the year 1810, the exports from China, by the Company's ships, were somewhat less than usual, owing probably to the want of Capital, and not to a diminished home demand, as it is said, from the increased use of West India coffee; when the very reverse, I believe, is the fact\*.

A SIMILAR cause prevents our turning to account the Spice Islands, formerly so lucrative to their possessors. By our re-conquest of the Moluccas, and the recent accession of Java, we have driven the French and Dutch from the last strong hold they possessed in Asia; indeed, the only fragment of the trade, enjoyed by these nations for many years past, has been confined to an occasional ship of war, stealing to Europe with a cargo, and with various success. Notwithstanding these acquisitions, spices have become scarce, and consequently dearer, not by following the policy practised by the Dutch, of making an annual

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\* It is asserted, by very intelligent merchants, that the demand for tea has *increased* since coffee became so low in price, and this belief is pretty general.

bonafire of the surplus Aromatics, to prevent a fall in the price—but from the want of wherewithall to purchase them, or to pay the labour of cultivating and collecting them. In more direct terms, their capital is unequal to the vast region, over which their mercantile Monopoly extends, and their territorial revenue is now entirely exhausted, by the expenses of the different Government establishments; and indeed, falls short of their actual demands, instead of furnishing a large net surplus, to be remitted home in investments.

In again addressing you, I cannot resist noticing, as an indication of growing attention to this subject, on the part of the public, the resolutions of the meeting of merchants at Greenock, on the 27th ult. on which it is proposed, to found a Petition to Parliament. In thus, however, expressing my satisfaction at this event, I would not be understood to insinuate, that my very humble essays, had the smallest share in bringing it about; and I beg to assure you, that my joy would not be the less sincere, to see every town and village in Britain, pursuing similar measures, although coupled with the assurance, that even the very name of this paper had never been heard of amongst them. My sole object in obtruding myself on public notice, was, if possible, to stimulate inquiry on this subject—not to satisfy it—to point out,

(like a finger post,) where the road lies—not to conduct my readers through it—and if they shall happen to fall upon it of their own accord, and without the aid of a directing *Post*, it only proves that they may be right, without my assistance, but it does not prove that I am *wrong*.

I understand rightly the import of the sixth of the Greenock Resolutions, it seems, as if on it they intend bottoming their Petition; if so, I fear, granting the prayer of it, would not greatly benefit them. If the Company were to retain the whole of the China Trade, also that of their own territory, and the exclusive supply of Great Britain, what remains of Asia could be turned to little advantage. A carrying trade might doubtless be maintained to some extent, but the chief commodity which could be obtained from the *open* territories in return for our manufactures, would be spices, and which admit but of a limited demand, all over the world. A considerable trade might be carried on in drugs from Sumatra, and the neighbouring islands, but the article for which there exists the greatest demand is tea, and which would form the staple commodity of a free trade. Without this, I do not see what the homeward cargo of a private trader could consist of, and it is to be feared, the Company will not readily abandon

this, their most lucrative, as well as most extensive commerce.

THE Greer & Gentlemen disclaim every intention of trenching on the *substantial* rights of the East India Company. This is at best an ambiguous declaration of neutrality. The adjective *substantial*, being capable of as great a variety of qualifications, as may suit the arguments of either party. Those Gentlemen may have a very clear comprehension of what they believe to be the substantial rights of the Company—on the other hand, the Directors see *as clearly* the extent of those rights, and yet, I dare say their conceptions of them, are not only different, but contrary. If the Monopoly is bad of itself—if the country is under no obligation to continue it—if the continuance of it would inflict more mischief, than it could possibly do good—and if its abrogation would be productive of more benefit than loss, or inconvenience to the *whole British nation*; then it seems to follow, that *whole*, and not *half* measures, should be resorted to.—When, however, the *sum* total of the influence of the Company is considered, and the infinite variety of channels in which it is exerted, the task seems almost a hopeless one; but stirring the question, is the chief *means* of making converts, and the object of contention is surely worth the contest. I do not, how-

ever, presume to arraign any part of the resolutions of these gentlemen, but on the contrary highly applaud the public spirit that dictated them, and hail them as a happy omen of the extension of that liberal inquiry, which always conducts to results founded in truth and reason. And as the value of the trade to the Eastern Archipelago, which these Gentlemen would limit themselves to, can only be estimated by an experiment, which has never yet been made, it is surely worth while risking it—besides, value being not an immutable, but a constantly fluctuating quantity, circumstances may occur in the lapse of a very few years to alter materially its amount in this instance. When our ancestors made North America a place of banishment for those who should have been *hanged*, I conjecture they valued it a small matter.

FROM the little I have heard of the Physical and *Moral* capabilities of New Holland, I am persuaded that a beneficial commerce, with that vast country, will in time be opened, if a liberal policy be adopted in the Government of it, and few restrictions laid on its infant trade. But this is a field on which I cannot at present enter.



## LETTER TENTH.

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It would be an unnecessary waste of your time, and a sort of insult on your understandings, to repeat the trile maxim, that the wants and desires of mankind give rise to trade, and that the gratification of these wants stimulate new desires and new wants. It would be more suited to practical purposes if the *sum and precise objects* of such wants, in any given country, or given time, could be shown to a tolerable degree of certainty. Where a legislature does not impose arbitrary and capricious exactions, or hold out equally unreasonable bounties, the want of information in these particulars is the chief cause of failure in mercantile speculation, and a proper knowledge of them almost the only means of insuring success. Where any particular adventure is entered into without adhering to this discreet rule, every thing is trust-

ed to *chance*, and may turn out fortunately, or otherwise, as that blind guide shall please to direct.

To the above circumstances, or their inability to profit by them, has been owing in a very great degree the losses of the East India Company. Wars in India have of late exhausted their territorial revenue, yet trade they must, for the purpose of meeting their home payments, and in hopes of better times ; while many of the articles they import are utterly unsaleable, others of diminished value, and, at best, but saving a loss, some few articles excepted. It would not be long thus with private adventurers : they would have no particular commercial system to support ; if the trade did not succeed, they would relinquish it. Besides, a private adventurer, if he found the home market glutted with the commodities he imports, would instantly proceed elsewhere with his cargo, as a more enlarged demand might prompt him. This the Company cannot do ; their importations must be to the port of London alone, where the goods are warehoused, and cannot be re-exported, without becoming subject to a sale and heavy charges, which a private trader would save, by proceeding directly to a better market. In their exports, the same thing would occur : a private trader, if he found his cargo unsaleable at

one port of Asia, would try others, till he found a market for his investment. This the Company cannot conveniently do; the cargoes of their ships are necessarily discharged at the ports to which they are destined at home, (some few cases excepted,) without being subjected to any change of circumstance, of supply, or demand. To be sure, as their cargoes are, to a great extent, military and naval stores, their adhering to such a practice is of less importance; but where the investment happens to be of a general nature, the effect must be very injurious.

THERE is also another very obvious reason why the Company do not trade to the same advantage as individuals might. Their being sovereigns as well as merchants, the duties of the former (to which I believe they are most zealously attached) occupy the greatest share of their attention. At all events, their political, must necessarily interfere with their commercial duties, and where such opposite pursuits are combined, it is not in nature to expect that both will be prosecuted diligently. The minute details of a Mercantile Counting House are totally incompatible with wielding the destinies of a mighty empire. In their capacity of merchants, much will depend on such minute and apparently trifling information, as in their character of Sovereigns, would be unworthy of notice.

To this political and commercial *monstrosity* must be attributed, to no inconsiderable extent, the want of success of the Company in that department to which their views have been of late years, perhaps, the least effectually directed. In short, they cannot perform impossibilities—they cannot do the duties of both sovereign and subject.

ANXIOUS as I am that every British merchant should, at least, have the election of making trial of a trade from which they have been so long and so injuriously excluded, I would, with all humility, however unpopular such counsel may be, warn my countrymen not to be too sanguine in their first views of profit by it, nor to indulge in golden dreams out of which it is possible ruin only may awaken them. Much certainly may be expected, and rationally, from such an additional field to adventure; but I fear (pardon my apprehensions) that more is looked for from this measure than ought, in reason, to be anticipated. In arguing such an unpopular point, one runs great risk of incurring odium. The public voice is now loud against the Monopoly, and a woe is pronounced against him that shall attempt to preserve a vestige of it. The people have been told by Dr. Smith and other eminent men that all Monopolies are very bad things; that the East India monopoly is one of the *worst* kind; and, *cetero*, by regular syl-

logism; it must be bad—and must be entirely swept from the face of the earth—the trade laid open, and the country free to every species of colonization. By the same process of reasoning from *generals* an empiric might infer that air and exercise are excellent good things for restoring health, and, acting on this conclusion, might order his gouty patient to get out of his bed or easy chair, and run six miles every morning before breakfast! Would a skilful physician, who knew any thing of a gouty disorder, recommend such practice, however much he might be satisfied that air and exercise were good *generally*? or would the patient long survive such a violent experiment? Such an exception to general rules, do I conceive, the question regarding the Company's *territorial* possessions to be. No instance has ever occurred of a similar form of government, and extending over such an immense region as that which the Company rules; and to effect too violent a change might produce more mischief than would the continuance of the old system—the *immediate* effect of all revolutions in government being injurious and often fatal to the countries where they occur. If the trade is gradually laid open, as it doubtless will be, the disposal of the future sovereignty of India may be safely left to the Legislature, where the subject will engage the most

serious consideration of people the best qualified to judge of its merits.

As it may be of use to point out the objects of this traffic, to those who have not been in the habit of inquiring into such matters, I subjoin a list of those articles which most generally form the homeward investments of private traders; craving pardon of the better informed of my readers for forcing on their attention what is already familiar to them.

ARTICLES WHICH MAY BE IMPORTED

INDIA AND CHINA.

Aloes Cicotrina.

Aloes Hepatica.

Alum.

Anana Beads.

Assafetida.

Bark.

Bandannas.

Benzoin.

Borax.

— unrefined (Tincal.)

Buds or Bloom of Cassia.

Buffalo Hides.

Cakelack.

Camboja.

Caraphire.

— unrefined.

Cordamoms.

Carmenia Wool.

Cassia Lignea.

Chessam Silk.

China Porcelaine.

China Root.

Cinnabar.

Cinnamon.

Clove Bark.

Cloves.

Cochineal.	Myrrh.
Coffee.	Nutmegs.
Columba Root.	Nutmegs candied.
Corial Rough.	Nux vomica.
Cotton Wool.	Oil Cinnamon.
Cotton Yarn.	Olibanum.
Cowries.	Opium.
Dragons Blood.	Palampores.
Drugs.	Pepper.
Ebony Wood.	Pepper long.
Elephant Teeth.	Piece goods, all sorts.
Extract Rhubarb.	Pimento, Allspice.
Fossil Alkali.	Red Wood.
Galbanum.	Rhubarb.
Ginger, Green.	Rice.
Ginger.	Safflower.
Gold dust.	Sago.
Gum Amoniacum.	Sa! Amoniac.
— Arabic.	Saltpetre.
Gum Elemic.	Sandal, or Japan wood.
— Lack.	Siedlack.
— Myrrh.	Silk, all kinds.
— Sarcocol.	Shellack.
Gum Tragacanth.	Shawls, Cashmere.
Hemp or Paut.	Spikenard.
Indigo.	Sticklack.
Ivory wrought from China.	Sugar.
Japan copper.	Sugar Candy.
Lacquerc. Ware.	Tea, black.
Mother of Pearl do. Drops.	— green.
do. shells.	Turmerick.
Mace.	

THE above list is by no means so full as might easily be made out, but contains merely the arti-

cles most familiar to me, and which the little helps I possess enable me to furnish. It ought however to be noticed that several of the articles included in the list are prohibited, except for re-exporting, on the principle of their interfering with our own manufactures—a policy in some instances questionable.

LETTER ELEVENTH.



WHEN I first ventured to engage myself publicly in the discussion of this important topic, I had no end in view but that of attempting to add to the stock of materials, necessary to a thorough investigation of the affairs of the Company, and of our Indian commercial policy generally—as also to solicit the country to engage temperately in such an investigation—previously to their becoming an object of legislative provision. What I undertook was prompted by a deep-rooted conviction, the result both of some little reflection and of observation, which the circumstances of my life (perhaps unhappily) presented me with sufficient opportunities of making. In taking, therefore, the side I did in this question, I probably acted with more conscientiousness than policy; but, as I would ra-

ther choose that the former should be my rule of conduct than the latter, or at least that my character should partake more largely of the one than the other, I am willing to suffer some little inconvenience by it, particularly as it may serve to establish my disinterestedness, a qualification of some importance in such discussions.

THIS brief statement of my views I considered necessary to prevent any misconstruction of my motives in making a remark, which the reading of several publications on the same side of this question forces from me, and that is, that this contest with the Company (as is too often the case in all discussions of a similar nature) has assumed a tone of asperity and personality not at all calculated to aid the cause in which it is employed. The Directors, as well as the inferior servants, of the Company, are treated with as little ceremony, or even civility, as if they were no better than licensed plunderers, and indeed are called so in terms not very equivocal. Such abuse, were it even merited, does more harm than good, as it always leads to a suspicion of weak argument, and is more particularly hurtful in this case where argument abounds. Let them aim their most deadly shafts at the system of Monopoly, by which the country has been most injuriously excluded from an intercourse with the fairest portion of the globe;

but let not the reproaches, which ought to be exclusively levelled at the system, fall indiscriminately on the heads of those who are entrusted with the execution of its details. The fault does not lie with them, however reluctant they may be to part with that authority with which the country has invested them. This is no more than human nature, and the Directors are no more than *men*! But farther, such abuse is not only hurtful to sound argument, and offensive to good breeding, but is directly contrary to fact. It is well known that among the servants of the Company are men of the most incorruptible integrity, the most splendid heroism, and the noblest patterns of virtue—men of the highest attainments in arts and literature—and whom Britain may proudly boast of numbering among her sons. The achievements of a Clive, ought not to be forgotten, and the enlightened labours of a Jones or a Colebrooke—and an hundred more distinguished names ought, at least, to rescue the servants of the Company from the flippant censures of malignity or ignorance.

THERE are too, some politicians, who can see no danger whatever in new-modelling the whole of our Indian policy and government, and who would apply the same broad principles of legislation to those regions which are considered as

best suited to the very differently compounded States of Europe.* To me such a measure has always appeared to be fraught with danger, if not impossible ever to be put in practice. To apply the principles of a free government to a population whose manners and habits have been framed and nourished in despotism; and, above all, who are notorious for their superstitious pertinacity of adherence to their own peculiar notions, both of government and manners; † to a people who, from their previous habits, were unqualified to perform any of the functions of a free constitution

* "If we could conceive a nation where each of the inhabitants had but one eye, one leg, and one hand, it is plain, that before you could institute them into a republic, an allowance must be made for those material defects wherein they differed from other mortals; or, imagine a legislator forming a system for the Government of Bedlam, and proceeding upon the maxim that man is a sociable animal, and draw them out of their cells, and form them into corporations or general assemblies; the consequence might probably be, that they would fall foul on each other, or burn house over their own heads."—*Swift's Works*.

may not be improper to notice here, that amid all the changes of masters which the Asiatic dominions have experienced, a very material change in the government has never been thought of. They may hate, may depose, or may murder their tyrants, but they never think of attributing their vices and crimes to a defect in the constitution, or by any checks attempt to remedy it.

—seems to me the most dangerous of experiments. An experiment which, if hazarded, would not fail to produce the most fatal consequences. To alter materially the system of government or jurisprudence you must first alter their religion; and to attempt this suddenly would be to plunge these fine regions into all the horrors of revolution, and drive its inhabitants to despair. * And such would be but an indifferent way of insuring either the glory or the safety of the British name and possessions in India. When Solon was asked if the system of laws he had framed for the Athenians

* It may be thought unnecessary to multiply instances of their sensibility to insult, and their quickness in resenting it, when it seems in any degree to have been aimed at their peculiar superstitions or prejudices. I hope I shall be pardoned, however, in mentioning one, among hundreds, which came under my own observation:—

A foreman ship-wright in one of the principal dock-yards of Calcutta, by pure accident, voided his spittle on one of the native workmen. The man instantly threw down his tools, and vowed vengeance. In a few minutes, the insult was communicated to the whole workmen in the yard, amounting to several hundreds, who immediately struck work, and demanded reparation. The tumult continued nearly four hours, and it was not till the master-builder appeased the resentment of the insulted man, with a handsome gratuity, sufficient to restore him to his *lost cast*, that the uproar subsided. —Even after all, it would have been difficult, had not it been made manifest, that it originated in an accident.

were the most perfect, he replied, "No, but they are the best that can be framed for the Athenian people." So, whatever change may be contemplated in the administration of India, the moral peculiarities of its inhabitants must, for centuries to come, preclude all hope of an assimilation to even the broad and leading features of the policy of European States. A gradual and partial melioration might doubtless be accomplished; but even this must be delicately managed, if the peace and security of these countries be respected. *

I must beg leave to repeat here, what I have

* On the difficulty of applying general principles in politics, without a due study of *particulars*, Professor Stewart has the following judicious remark, if I may be allowed the assistance of a name so distinguished:—

"In every country whatever, besides the established laws, the political state of the people is affected by an infinite variety of circumstances, of which no words can convey a conception, and which are to be collected only from actual observation. Even in this way, it is not easy for a person who has received his education in one country, to study the government of another; on account of the difficulty he must necessarily experience, in entering into the associations which influence the mind under a different system of manners, and in ascertaining (especially on political subjects) the complex ideas conveyed by a foreign language."

—*Elem. Phil. Hum. Mind*

uniformly maintained, that I would much rather see the *patronage* of India vested in the Court of Directors, for some time at least, than in the hands

To engage in a speculation, on the peculiar institutions, civil and religious, and the singular manners and habits of the oriental states, particularly of those subject to the authority of the Company, would be out of my province, and far beyond the reach of my capacity. I cannot, however, dismiss this subject without noticing the impressions I have received from the very partial observations I have been enabled to make on this extraordinary race of people—particularly as it opens a wide field for the speculations of the moralist, to reconcile the apparent contradictions of human nature, and to resolve, in one general system, those discrepancies, which to ordinary minds seem to bid defiance to every rule of reason, and every principle of Philosophy—to arrange, combine, and systemise, is the province of the moralist—my more unambitious task shall be confined to the detail of a few facts.

Amid all the changes which have taken place in India, the character of the original Hindoo inhabitants remains unaltered. They still continue to be the same soft, effeminate, and timorous race, they ever were; their minds are seldom to be roused above ordinary exertion; and if, by chance, it should rise to an act of heroism, it is only what Montesquieu somewhere calls, “the heroism of slavery.” There is, however, in their religion, a principle of fanaticism, which stimulates their courage or supplies its place—and the same individual that would now prostrate himself in the dust, and kiss the very shoe-ties of an execrable drunken Englishman, to save himself from perhaps a trifling blow, may next hour be found suspending himself voluntarily, by iron hooks thrust in his flesh,

of his Majesty's Ministers. Such an overwhelming addition to an influence already great, might prove very dangerous, if not fatal, to our own li-

and exulting in his sufferings, merely to comply with some absurd rite, prescribed by the extravagant superstition of his religion.

Among all the doctrines that have obtained among mankind, none has tended so much to enslave the mind, as that of absolute uncontrollable predestination: that the famine may waste, the sword ravage, and fire destroy, *unresisted*, merely from a belief that God has willed it, seems the most absurd, as well as the most dangerous species of belief, or rule of conduct, by whom, men can be actuated. Yet this belief is universal among
 h the following]

A fire broke out in the bazar at Calcutta. Fortunately, a part of one of the Company's ship's crews, on leave of absence, were quartered near, who soon repaired to the spot, headed by one of their officers. The fire had just reached the house of a Hindoo shopkeeper, known to the officer, and whom he found sitting, with apparent unconcern, and a hand on each side of his head. He was asked "Why he did not get up and exert himself to save his property?" to which he replied "that it was of no use, since God had decreed that it should be burnt." By pulling down some intermediate bamboo huts, which communicated the fire to the buildings, and exerting a little activity, it was soon got under by the seamen. The officer now accosted his friend, prefacing his address with an expletive usual among sailors, "well," said he, "you see we have prevented God's decrees." "Ah no! Saib, Saib," rejoined the devout worshipper of Bramha, "you have only proved that, although God decreed the fire, he likewise decreed *you should be sent to extinguish it!*" Yet the same man,

erties, which rather than put in jeopardy, we had better renounce India for ever. Divided as the patronage at present is, among a number of individuals, of different views and different interests, this influence, politically speaking, is comparatively harmless. It may doubtless be abused, but not to a dangerous extent. But if such influence were added to that of the Crown, directed by a popular, or corrupt Minister, its effects cannot be contemplated without fear, by any one who has the purity of the British Constitution at heart. I

who would not stir up his house from destruction, would not
 the chance of gaining the value of a sun, loaded with bullets, for
 at the risk of obtaining nothing!

Every one who has had an opportunity of observing the general character of a native army, particularly in the Peninsula, must have remarked that in time of battle the men will sustain the fire of an European army undismayed, until their whole ranks are annihilated. But if their antagonists shall come to charge them with fixed bayonets, their courage and discipline fail them, and nothing short of entire discomfiture will be the consequence. I have heard it remarked by many officers, that it was to the known age of their peculiarities in this particular that Sir Arthur Wellesley owed, in a great measure, his brilliant successes in the Indian Peninsula in the last Marahatta war.

These apparent contradictions may no doubt be reconciled; but I have already trespassed too far on the patience of my reader, to whom I owe an apology, for such a long, and perhaps unprofitable, digression.

would therefore humbly hope, that whatever change is effected in the commercial policy of the Company, the patronage of India may remain as it is, or nearly so.

THERE is likewise another point in this discussion, about which I have the misfortune of differing in opinion from some of those who take the same side in the general argument; that is, whether or not the Company, in the event of the trade being laid open, on the expiry of their grant, will be entitled to any indemnification. It is a maxim in politics, received perhaps with some limitation, that the public good should never be founded on private wrong; or, in other words, where individual interest is forced to give way to public benefit, a full and ample equivalent ought to be bestowed. In applying this maxim to the state of affairs of the Company, we must be certain, in the first place, that they are fairly included in its meaning. It has been urged against the equitable claims of the Company for indemnification, that they were well aware of the period of their exclusive grant, the termination of which was accurately defined—that they cannot plead being taken by surprise, and ought to have been providing silently and gradually for such an event—that as to the expenses of their conquests, they must also have been made under the belief that

the revenues of these countries, for the unexpired period of their grant, would yield an abundant return for the charges of subduing them. Such reasoning is partly right and partly wrong. Although the Company knew the period at which ^{the} their Monopoly was to expire, they also knew that on all former occasions it was renewed to them: matters are *now*, to be sure, very different from what they were formerly, yet still they might not be altogether without hope of a similar issue. But they have still a much better argument, in the necessity they are under of maintaining their establishments, to the last day of their political existence, complete and entire. What would become of their vast and expensive establishment of ships, which at the end of two years must cease to be employed, if no prospective arrangement shall prevent it? and how much individual misery would follow the absolute annihilation of the commercial part of the Company's civil establishment in India? an establishment which comprehends thousands educated expressly for this service, whose habits more peculiarly fit them for such avocations, and who would by the measure of a free trade be thrown entirely out of employment. Besides, there are many branches of civil expenditure which it would be impossible for the Company to reap the entire benefit of, if they should cease to exist as an exclusive Company

by the wisdom of ages and the universal experience of mankind. All this they should have at least attempted, before endeavouring to persuade us that an exclusive trade, is the only trade applicable to regions comprehending nearly one-third of the known world.

In the letter above noticed, the Protectorate of Cromwell is triumphantly alluded to as an exemplification of the necessity of Monopoly, and as a satisfactory proof that if the trade were laid open universal ruin would be the consequence. But it ought to be remembered (and I have ample documents relating to those times before me to prove it) that the failure of that experiment, if it failed, which I do not admit, arose not from any inherent excellency of the Monopoly system, but from the insufficiency of individual capital and the shortness of the period allowed for the trial. Had the one been greater, and the other longer, a different result had been shown. But, even admitting that many cases of individual ruin would occur, it is an evil that would soon work its own cure, and in a way which all the world knows, and which it would be an unprofitable waste of time to say any thing more about.

The argument however on which the Directors seem chiefly to rely, which may be considered

their tower of strength, and which is urged with singular address and ability, is that drawn from the peculiarity of the institutions and manners of the Eastern nations, which admit of the use of European articles in a very limited degree, and scarcely afford the hope of a change. Under this head will be found some notable specimens of ratiocination, and will prove, if proof were necessary, to what shifts these Gentlemen are put for solid argument, in a cause where argument could not avail them. To notice a few of these will be the work of a single paragraph, with which if the reader is not satisfied I must recommend to his perusal the document which contains them.

It is exultingly brought forward as a proof of the utter insignificance of the Indian trade, that, by the provisions of their charter of 1793, they became bound to furnish tonnage to private adventurers who might choose to embark in that commerce—that they have so furnished it; and that “too at a cheaper rate than they themselves pay for it,” or than can be provided by any individual Merchant, but that notwithstanding all this, very little has been applied for. Now this, to say the least of it, has a specious seeming; but let us examine how the matter really stands. In the first place then, I would put the question to the Honourable Board. What motive have they for thus bribing individual adventure by furnishing freight below what it costs

them? If the profits of their trade are such as to afford scope for the exercise of such profuse liberality I cannot see how it is possible their debt can be yearly increasing. If, on the other hand, the trade be bad, as they say it is, how come they to be so prodigal of that money which ought to be much more beneficially applied? Any individual who would act thus with a losing trade, and growing incumbrances, would be justly marked as a madman, if not worse. Nor can I perceive any very great reason for a different application of the rule to the affairs of the Honourable Company. But, in the next place, let us see *why*, notwithstanding the liberal encouragement of the Company to exportation and importation by private merchants, so little capital is embarked in this trade; and to explain this satisfactorily will require little reach of thought. I can hardly conceive it possible that the Company or the country could seriously expect that the provisions of the Act of 1793, regarding the trade of individuals, would be at all beneficial to the nation: it seems indeed almost problematical if the framers of that Act really expected any benefit to arise from it but to the Company—to them it had this advantage, that it stilled popular clamour, which was loud against them, by seeming to concede a point which could do them no manner of injury. But for the general British merchant, how could it benefit him,

while the Company have the right to select his investment; to prescribe the time and mode of packing and shipping; the ports their goods shall be shipped to; the time of sailing; the sole regulation of the imports; the very warehousing; and, to conclude, the time and manner of sale? Subject to such capricious limitations, and circumscribed to a single port, could any reasonable person look for solid advantages from this commerce? And yet the Directors use this as an argument for the continuance of their Monopoly, and take credit to themselves for furnishing freight to the private trader at a cheaper rate than he himself could! The private trader surely owes them thanks for this instance of munificence; but he, we fear, will be apt to exclaim, with the facetious monarch of these realms, "God preserve me from my friends, I can take care of my enemies myself!" * One word more and I have done on this branch of the subject. If the assertions of the Directors, relative to the inefficiency of the Indian trade, be correct; if it be true, that there exists so little demand or hope of a demand for British articles in India, or for articles imported from these regions to this country, it seems, at least to me, to prove something very different from that intended by these Honourable Gentlemen. It appears to prove very clearly that the Company themselves ought to have no trade with India; that every hope of gain is at

an end ; and that their capital ought to be directed into a channel where it would be more profitably employed. If their reasoning proves any thing, it certainly does this ; for the trade that could not afford a return to individual enterprise, most surely will not prove a source of profit to a trading corporation, or I shall be glad to learn how. Thus I have travelled rapidly over this part of the reasoning by which the cause of Monopoly is supported.

I WILL entirely omit the arguments by which it is attempted to be proved that no analogy exists between the trade with India and China, as carried on by America, and what it *might be*, if conducted freely with this country. America, as a neutral power, certainly, *in time of war*, possesses advantages which Britain could not expect even under a free trade. But, it ought to be remembered, that these are but of a temporary nature, and not at all calculated to affect the general question ; besides, it cannot be doubted, that if once we were allowed to compete with them, we would, even in the carrying trade, share, to a considerable extent, what is at present engrossed by them alone.

I MUST now beg to say a single word on the trade to China, which, both Ministers and the Directors

seem to concur in opinion, 'ought to be still subjected to a Monopoly, whatever may be the destiny of that to British India. The reason for this point being so readily conceded by the Ministry I am at a loss to conceive. The chief ground seems to be, that confining this branch to a Company, and to a single port, it will conduce to the security of the revenue; but *how* it is thus to operate remains still a question. If it is urged that tea, the chief commodity imported from China, is an article which admits of greater facility of smuggling than most others, it ought to have been shown that that profession is more generally practised at the out ports, than those of London, Gravesend, Deal, Dover, Haslings, &c. or that the professors of this ingenious calling, are more dextrous at the former than the latter; or, lastly, it ought to have been proved that the revenue is more faithfully, as well as less expensively, collected at the port of London, than elsewhere within these realms. These propositions, I apprehend, it will be difficult for either the Ministry or Directors to establish in the face of so many opposing facts. All the world knows the extent to which smuggling from the Company's ships in the Downs is carried: and yet, notwithstanding this admitted fact, we are seriously told, that the revenue would suffer from transferring to the out-ports a part of that trade, which is now entirely exposed to such whole-sale depredations.

dation.—As to the pretended delicacy of the intercourse with the Chinese, the best safeguard to the public, and assurance of such a peaceable demeanour as shall preserve the necessary harmony in their dealings with this haughty, absurd, capricious, and contemptible people, is that which restrains the passions of all mankind, viz. motives of individual interest, to which private traders are sufficiently alive. Or, if it were found in practice, that this principle was too weak, to restrain them from outrages which would prove fatal to their intercourse, why not establish a board of Supercargoes, to regulate the trade in a manner similar to the existing institution? or even continue these very gentlemen, subject to the controul of the Government at home. Would not this obviate greatly the objection of danger, in opening the trade with this country? I have never heard that the Americans were ever in great jeopardy of being excluded from the Chinese dominions, from the want of those safeguards, considered as indispensable by the Company and its advocates; and yet they have no national establishment to quicken *their* sense of *interest*, which seems to be to them a sufficient incentive to prudent conduct. With Chinese politics I have nothing to do; but I cannot help thinking that it would be an unprecedented, I had almost said unwarrantable, stretch of power for a Bri-

tish Parliament to legislate for the Emperor of China. There is no example, I believe, on record, of the vessels of one friendly and neutral power being barred access to the ports of another, *by the enactments of that power to which the vessels belong.* The port of Canton is within the sovereignty of the Emperor of China, and if he is willing to allow every vessel without distinction, to enter that port, no very good plea can be urged why our own legislature should interfere to prevent it. How would the Americans feel, supposing them on the best understanding with us, if Congress should enact that no American vessel should be allowed to touch at a British port, *save those from New York*; and yet the proposed arrangement between this country and China is precisely similar. We need hardly add, as it seems to be generally understood, that in the event of our obtaining a free trade with China, the productions of that country would be brought to the consumer at a rate greatly below what is at present paid for them, which would, of course, tend to an increase of demand. While on this subject, I cannot avoid stating what I know to be a fact, that, in the city of New York, the prices current of Bohea tea, were, in the month of February last, exclusive of duties, 8^d, per lb. while the same article, at the same period, at the Company's sales in London, also exclusive of duties, was sold

at 1s. 10d. per lb. Now, of this enormous difference of almost 200 per cent. under a free trade, a great part would either go into the pockets of the consumer, or be added to the revenues of the Empire.

I HAVE already transgressed the limits I had fixed, for a few very humble remarks on this memorable letter, to which no small share of praise is due, for the very able manner in which the arguments are conducted, and for having said, and said well, every thing that can possibly be urged in favour of the Monopoly. I, for my part, rejoice that the advocacy of the Company's cause has fallen into such very able hands, as it will prove that the utmost speciousness of address will not prevail over the simple dictates of reason. We cannot blame the Directors—it is natural enough for them to strive to prolong the existence of their power, and the continuance of the most splendid commercial establishment the world ever beheld; but the general interests of the country must not be sacrificed, merely because such a sacrifice would be grateful to the feelings of a comparatively few individuals. I shall therefore drop the discussion, with expressing my earnest hope that the guardians of our public freedom will not hastily listen to the suggestions of interest, or passively yield to the powerful solicitations of misguided influence.

LETTER THIRTEENTH.



IN my last letter I hazarded a few remarks on the correspondence between his Majesty's Ministers and the Honourable Court of Directors on the subject of the renewal of their Charter, in which I incidentally referred to the comparative prices of teas, at the ports of New York and London, both exclusive of duties; and attempted to direct the public attention to the enormous difference of price at the latter above the former, and the tendency that a free trade would have either to equalize these prices or increase the revenue of the United Kingdoms. I shall now exhibit a complete table of the prices of that commodity at the above named ports, and at nearly corresponding dates, for ten years, from March, 1803, till March, 1812, both inclusive, by which it will be seen, that the average of the above period is about 85 per

cent. higher in our Metropolis than in New York, although the 18 months of embargo, which had the effect of greatly enhancing prices in America, is comprehended within its limits. From the respectable quarter whence I obtained this document, no sort of suspicion can attach to it—indeed, the same sources are open to every one who will take the trouble of inspecting and comparing the printed prices current of this period, and which would thus render detection an easy matter.

WHEN the reader shall have perused this table, I will offer a few additional remarks suggested by its contents.—*Vide Table.*

PRESUMING that the statements contained in the above table are correct in point of fact, and that the calculations are accurately made, it appears very clear, that the purchaser of goods in London actually pays for that article 85 per cent. above what it would cost him in New York, on an average of ten years, admitting that no duties were exigible at either port. Now it is equally clear and convincing to me, at least, (that) under a free trade, the greater part of this difference must either go into the pockets of the public, or be added to the revenue, and in either case the national advantage would be indisputable. I say the greater part, for I am aware it will be urged that the

charges of transit will, under any circumstance, be less heavy on American than on British bottoms; and this, to a certain extent, I am ready to admit. But in order to give the Monopolist the full advantage of every argument he can bring forward, even to the use of materials which we are entitled to the entire benefit of, I am willing to allow a deduction of 35 per cent. to enable British merchants to import teas to these realms, and to dispose of them with a fair profit at the same rate that a citizen of the United States can. Surely this allowance will be considered as ample; and to some, it may appear more than sufficient to serve the end for which it is conceded, yet we have still a free reversion of 50 per cent. to be disposed of in the way most conducive to the national advantage. To pursue this speculation somewhat farther—let us suppose that the annual demand for this commodity in the United Kingdom is equal to thirty millions of pounds, which is no very extravagant supposition, when we consider that it forms a material and almost essential article of consumption of about eighteen millions of souls—and taking the average price, exclusive of duties, at three shillings per pound, which I presume to be not very wide of the truth, this will give an yearly sum of four millions five hundred thousand sterling, expended on this single article, that is, at the importation price—to which we are at liberty

to add, if it so please the Legislature, the above 50 per cent. in the shape of duty, to keep up teas to their present prices, and still afford a fair profit to the trader. This will yield a clear disposable addition to the revenue of *two millions two hundred and fifty thousand sterling*, which would be infinitely better employed in reduction of our national debt, than, in spite of all ure and reason, in keeping alive commercial jealousies, and maintaining distinctions hurtful to the interests, as well as degrading to the feelings of every man in the empire, and contrary to the principles of that even handed justice, the proud boast of the British laws and nation. In the assumptions I have made in the detail of this argument I may be, to some little extent erroneous, nor do I pledge myself to their accuracy, but this does not invalidate the *principle* of my reasoning: even if it should be found that I have over-rated the advantages of a free trade by one half, (which, however, I am confident is not the case,) still they are of sufficient importance to make it an object of desire, and to stimulate the nation to claim it. Nobody ever doubted the efficacy of a potion which restored him from a state of disease to ordinary health, merely because it did not communicate the vigour of Hercules.

If any of my more sceptical readers shall reject

the inferences I am desirous should be drawn from the foregoing facts and reasonings, I have still in reserve an additional argument, which, for their benefit, I shall shortly state, at the hazard of tiring the patience of those whose judgments are already convinced.

By the treaty between the United States and this country, concluded by Mr. Jay and our Ministry, in 1794, it is expressly provided in the 3d Article, that the importation of teas and other Indian commodities to Canada from the States, should be freely allowed; and by Act of the American Congress, 2d March, 1799, it is declared, that on tea thus exported to Canada, no drawback of the duties shall be *allowed*, (which by the bye, are from 33 $\frac{1}{4}$ to 90 per cent. on this article,) yet notwithstanding of this, a very considerable trade was for some time carried on with that colony, in competition with the British merchant who purchased his teas at the Company's sales, *although he had the benefit of the drawback of the whole duties to encourage him*, which the American had not, and although the charges of transit over-land from New York to Canada, were nearly as great as from London to the latter. This circumstance requires no comment.

It may probably be urged, that the teas import-

ed to New York are inferior in quality to those imported by the Company; but this also is contrary to fact.—The Company have no competition in our markets, and consequently have no interest in the careful selection of their goods; they are sure of a sale for, and at a high price. This, being an elementary ground of objection to all Monopolies, will not be questioned in this instance; besides, I have the corroborative testimony of persons long resident in the East Indies, who have dealt in that article, and are qualified to judge of its comparative value; they are not only equal, but superior in quality to New York, to the teas sold in London imported by the Company.

If it shall be contended that the Company ought in equity to receive an indemnification for the enormous sums they have expended in conquering and maintaining the vast empire over which they rule, and which a free trade would wrest from them (with the question whether the immense possessions are of real and essential importance to Britain, in a political point of view) have nothing to do, this not being the matter before me; or, whether they be equal in value to the price required to be paid for them,) my only reply, that if it shall be found the Company are entitled (as they may be) to a consideration for their pub-

lic services, let it be fairly paid, in a way less invidious than that of an exclusive right to the Chinese trade, for any period, however short. Let it be paid in money, and then the country will have, at least, the satisfaction of knowing the price they pay for the supposed harvest of the Company's industry.

I would always speak respectfully of the Company, and of those who have the direction of its affairs, and express my sincere conviction, that its concerns are as faithfully administered, as is possible under the system of management to which it is subjected. It is to the entire system I object, and not to the execution of its details. And if a change should take place, even to the full extent of my wishes, I should be sorry to see removed from their offices those servants of the Company, whose knowledge, experience, and other estimable qualities, would essentially benefit the country, under whatever form the affairs of India shall be conducted; and it certainly consists with reason that these qualifications should not be overlooked

I shall close my hasty speculation with this single remark, that if the Company claim a *right* to the *exclusive Trade* of any portion of these regions, that right can be least of all urged with respect to the Trade of China, where they have

not one single inch of territory, nor a vestige of political influence; and that the right to this Trade contended for by the public is less equivocal, than that to any spot beyond the Cape of Good Hope or the Straits of Magellan; and I entertain the confident hope, that the Legislature will consider it in a similar point of view. If it shall please them to decide otherwise, it will have the appearance at least of granting to the Company what they had no right to exact, without holding from them that which, in a just and qualified sense, they were entitled to of their own.

PEOPLE who contend with horror every sort of change, even when it is demonstrable, are apt to look upon the art of legislation as one which requires a long course of study and previous training, as if the ordinary rules for guiding a man in ordinary life were inapplicable to this profound mystery, and as if state policy and common sense were eternally at variance with each other—I would, however, with all deference to my reader, be of a somewhat different opinion—being firmly persuaded, that the same discreet management which would ensure tranquillity and affluence to a family, would have infallibly a similar effect on a nation, if practised by her rulers. Now, to apply this maxim to our

present subject:—Suppose I live in a retired valley of Scotland, about twelve miles from a city of any note; yet I have withal a desire, not unnatural, to regale myself with a cup of tea occasionally, being an enemy to *stronger drink*. It happens, however, unluckily, that in this said city, there is only one *tea shop*, and still more unluckily, that there is only one carrier to this valley, who is under the controul of my Landlord, the Squire of the neighbourhood, and who is reckoned (at least by the tea-man and his neighbour shop-keepers) to be little honestier than he should be—that is, sometimes taking what does not strictly belong to him—and withal, charges so unconscionably, that the carriage of my tea costs me about as much as the price at the shop, while at the same time, the tenants of the Squire on the other side of the water, are supplied by their carrier at a charge of about one half, and for an equal distance of road. I discover the extortion of the rogue—I threaten, I remonstrate with the Squire, either to make his carrier charge more moderately, or I will employ some one else to fetch home my *Souchong*—but all to no purpose! The Squire tells me, with a most serious face, that he cannot think of changing the carrier, as the shopmen require to be managed with “*great delicacy*,” being a peevish, fickle, testy set of small gentlemen, who

if not treated with out o' the way ceremony, would in their fretful humours slap the shop door in our faces, and for ever deprive us of our favourite infusion—that the carrier, although in some respects not a whit better than he should be, has yet notwithstanding, a sort of way—a manner, about him (he does not know well how to term it) that keeps these tatty gentlemen in humour—and, that if he allowed every common carrier to go to the shop, we would soon have fine doings of it. It is in vain I tell him that the carriers from the Estate on the other side of the water, deal in the same shop, and never quarrel with the shop-man—for he replies, that the tenants on that estate, drink less tea than we do, being but a half civilized sort of people; and that the carriers from our valley are a more rude and turbulent race of men. I rage, and stamp, and —; he tells me to be quiet, or he will put me in a strait jacket—I cool and implore his pity, inform him that tea forms two-thirds of my subsistence, and that if I am forced to pay double price for it, I must infallibly be ruined—he turns from me with vast indifference, and tells me I may go hang, if I please, but that his will must be my law.

Now, is this a shadow or a reality? If the meanest individual, or body of individuals, within these realms were thus treated, their free spirits

would revolt at such absurdity and injustice. Yet the difference between a family and a nation, in this respect, must be but small, for what is *injustice* in the one case, cannot be *its opposite* in the other

LETTER FOURTEENTH.



In a former letter I announced my intention of directing the notice of my readers, to that part of the *remonstrance* of the Directors, which touches on the dangers to be apprehended from the colonization of India, provided an open unrestricted commerce be established.

On this branch of the subject the Directors make a direct attempt to excite an alarm, lest freedom of trade, and consequent colonization, engender discontent, rebellion, revolt, and entire separation from the mother country—and that nothing can save us from such a fatal consummation to the British power in India, but that “*rigorous system of exclusion*,” so long and so successfully exercised by them over these vast dominions. They do not, however, condescend to favour us with any sort

of reason why such a train of evils should result from a free intercourse with these realms. By the allusion which they make to Europeans "struggling for popular rights," they would obviously insinuate that the minister whom they address ought to keep in his view the revolt of the American colonies, and by the terror of such an example to deter him from placing British Asia in a predicament so hazardous.

To argue from the fate of America, that a similar result will follow the opening of the trade to India, seems nearly as absurd as to take the *exception* for the rule, and conclude accordingly—for I would humbly be of opinion, the cases being in so many respects dis-similar, and agreeing in so few, that it would be next to a miracle, if the same effects followed in the one instance, as in the other. Were Europeans even allowed to the fullest extent to follow their property, and domiciliate themselves in India, I cannot see any reason for dreading a revolution in the government. They would not, as was the case with America, find whole tracts of land unoccupied and uncultivated, and a boundless territory almost unpeopled—they would not find themselves under the necessity of creating (it may be allowed the expression) a population to enable them to improve the wastes they occupied. Nor

would the different circumstances of the climate and manner of living, tend to nourish that hardihood of character, which renders revolt an almost infallible consequence of neglect or oppression.— But they would find every thing the very reverse of all this; a country crowded almost to redundancy with people, and with a people considerably civilized—lands highly cultivated—manufactories established—arts flourishing in no inconsiderable degree, and above all a peculiar system of religion, laws, and government, acted upon for ages, moulding and fashioning the moral character of the natives so as to preserve them a distinct and separate people. With all these obstacles to encounter, colonization must proceed very slowly, so slow indeed, that centuries must elapse before the colonists would bear such proportion to the natives as to dread a contest with them: and even when it arrives at this point what is to be the consequence? In case of revolt one of two things must happen; either the natives must join with the colonists and separate themselves from the mother country, or the natives will strive to regain their own independence, and expel both the colonists and the governors of their territory. If we can suppose the former to take place, we must first suppose the points of union between the parties, to be more multiplied than between the colonists and their mother country—that a greater assimila-

tion to the Asiatic character must take place, *that* appears to be possible—and that the colonists and the natives must be nearly balanced in point of force, and that their grievances must be mutual, and their interests, habits, and feelings, so combined, as that no sort of struggle for the ascendancy may arise when they shall have succeeded in driving their rulers from among them. Now all these gratuitous assumptions seem to me the next thing to impossibilities. That the Hindoos and Musselmén of Hindostan, whose very religion and superstitions would be an eternal bar to their mingling intimately with Christians, would enter into the views and participate in the feelings of discontented Englishmen, is almost incredible. Their motives to discontent would, indeed, be different, for what might be considered as injustice and oppression by the one party, would be viewed by the other as a matter of mere indifference.— Besides, is it not much more probable (as is the case to a certain extent now,) that the government will have a leaning towards *one party* of a population in every respect so dissimilar, (and what government can be perfectly impartial in such a case?) and would not this create continual heart-burnings and jealousies, not between the governors and governed, but *between the people themselves*. So that whatever appearance of dissatisfaction might be manifested, it is prob

ly apparent the sovereign would have always one party on his side. When the Helots of Sparta and the bondmen of Rome, threatened their respective governments with destruction, they were never joined, even by the restless spirits, of these turbulent states: and for this reason, that government favoured one party at the expense of the other, and could always calculate on the support of those whom they preferred. Thus, if we can contemplate the remote possibility of a revolt by the union of colonists and natives, we must first allow them the necessary time to incorporate, and become as one people.

It, however, contrary to all reason, they should prematurely unite, and expect their European masters, would they agree in their shares of the future government? If the colonists, by their superiority in vigour of body and of intellect, should gain the ascendancy, how are they to provide a sufficient army to over-awe a discontented population ten times more numerous than themselves, and at the same time defend their colony from the hostile attempts of the mother country to regain it? If the *numbers* of the natives should prevail, the colonists, of course, must calculate on being utterly extirpated—so that in either case, revolt would be useless, and would hardly be attempted, where the result might be so easily foreseen.

But let us adopt the other alternative circumstance under which I supposed it possible revolt would take place, being, that the natives might rise, and expel both the colonists and their rulers. On this branch, however, it will be quite unnecessary to dwell, for if the natives should become so daring, as to rid themselves of their masters, and resume the sovereignty of their own soil, which, by the bye, would be no very heinous crime, (I mean in a *moral* point of view,) I do not see any peculiarity in the Company's mode of government, to prevent such a consummation *at present*—or if they were joined by the French or Russians, and thus be enabled to contend with greater hopes of success against their rulers, such an event is as likely to occur under the present form of government, as any other; or indeed more so, for I would rather be disposed to consider colonization as more likely to *strengthen* the hands of the executive, than to weaken them, by giving an interest in the soil, to those entrusted with its defence — the best of all possible motives to extraordinary exertions.

But after all we have been arguing, it cannot be denied, and is well known to the Directors themselves, that colonization is proceeding in spite of their “system of rigorous exclusion,” and even to a considerable extent. The descendants of the

original Portuguese, French, and Dutch settlers, are numerous all over India, as are also a mixed population, the progeny of European males and native females—the former differing from the natives in little but their religion, and daily assimilating to their character—the latter, admitted to the society of neither class, although partaking of the qualities of both, but in different proportions. The pride of these last, would incline them to join with the Europeans in case of revolt, but their being in effect proscribed, and disqualified to hold any public appointment, would lead them to seek revenge by uniting with the natives whom they more nearly resemble. Of these classes there cannot be few, probably some hundred thousands. Besides, there are many all over India, born in Europe, who have no intention of returning thither, and are as much domiciliated as if the country were entirely free. So that colonization is proceeding, but perhaps somewhat slower, than it would otherwise do, though the difference may not be so great as some people conceive.

YET notwithstanding the fears of the Directors, it does not appear very clear to me, that colonization would be in any degree dangerous, or hurtful to the mother country, but the very reverse, provided we could make sure of living in amity with the colonists. If a voluntary separation were

to take placé; and a popular person at the head of the executive, under whatever title, might be found most convenient, with the naval power of Great Britain, to preserve from external attack the infant colony, until its strength were consolidated, it would probably be the best thing that could befall this country. But this is a speculation which would lead me out of my depth, but which might prove an interesting topic to those more profoundly skilled in the science of legislation.

THE greatest danger to be apprehended to our Indian possessions, seems to me to be from external attack, or silent encroachments, on the part of the European powers, whose frontiers are already nearly joined to that of British India. From Astracan on the Caspian Sea, the Russians might march an army into the heart of the British territory in less than a month, and as they have been for some time past extending their frontier on the side of Persia, the accomplishment of such a project might be thus rendered more easy. The neighbouring independent states, too, who look with secret or open discontent on the growing power of British India might readily be induced to join in an enterprise, to which they are already sufficiently prone. It has always too, been a favourite object of French policy, and although abandoned for the present, will be resumed if success continues to

attend their arms at some period perhaps not distant. Their recent occupation of Egypt was certainly with an ulterior view to an attempt on British India. Indeed, this has been long a favourite scheme with them; to recover part of that commerce of which the naval superiority of Britain has deprived them, is natural enough, and to this object the restless and intriguing genius of a *now* powerful people, will sooner or later be directed. When such an attempt is made, it will probably be by land, and for such an enterprize, the character of their armies peculiarly fit them. If their success in such an attempt were even but partial, it is more than probable that with the military possession of the intermediate countries, they would make an effort to divert a considerable portion of the *Indian trade to Europe over-land*, so that the naval strength of England would be harmless. It is now upwards of fifty years since a project of this nature was detailed by a French Consul at Caffa*, and who speaks confidently as to the ease with which such a trade might be carried on. He calculates minutely the number of days a caravan would take

* M. Peyssonel, resident at Caffa, "*Sur le Commerce de la Mer Noire.*" He gives the entire number of days requisite to transport merchandise, in this way, from Hindostan to Constantinople. The reader will find an abstract of the scheme in Gibbon's *Roman Empire*, Vol. 7, p. 319, 8vo. The treatise itself I have never seen.

from the plains of Hindostan, to where the Oxus becomes navigable, down which stream he conveys his merchandise to the Caspian Sea, from thence up the Cyrus, which takes its rise in the Iberian Caucasus, as far as that river is navigable—thence across the mountains to Sarapana on the Phasis, and down that river to the Euxine Sea. This scheme may be looked upon by many as visionary, from the apparent difficulty of the passage, but difficulties of a still more perplexing nature, the French have overcome, with seemingly little effort, within these few years; and if love of conquest, and hatred of the English, shall prompt them to such an undertaking, the trade of India, even under these disadvantages, would be looked upon as no inconsiderable compensation. The weakness of the Turkish Empire is the best security against attack from *her*, but the movements of France and Russia, on the frontier territory, ought to be watched with more than ordinary attention, for it is certainly from them, joined, perhaps, by Persia, that British India has most to fear. Were a peace occurring, and the French Factories of Chardenagore, Pondicherry, &c. restored to that nation, they would become the center of every sort of intrigue, and prepare the way for perhaps a more successful contest—but this, I presume, will not be the case, while Britain is able to continue the war.

IN following me to the close of these desultory epistles, my reader may consider it necessary to have a recapitulation of the arguments, and the inferences I wish to be deduced from them. Although I am not conscious of having throughout misrepresented any facts, or reasoned unfairly from them, yet if I shall be convicted of either, I will always be happy to make every atonement in my power. I have no reason to be *personally* hostile to the Company's establishments, but the contrary. I have, however, endeavoured to divest myself of every sort of prejudice and partiality, in discussing a question which involves the well-being of millions of individuals, and whether or not I have succeeded in my endeavours, my readers must judge.

I wish the following conclusions to be established.

1. THAT all Commercial Monopolies are prejudicial to the trade of the country where they are established, and are above all contrary to that freedom which is the birth right of every British Merchant.

2. THAT the Honourable East India Company can urge no sufficient plea, why their Monopoly should be an exception to this universal rule.

3. That even admitting their plea of expediency in a modified degree, they have not a capital wherewith to carry on advantageously such an extensive commerce.

4. THAT the proposed plan of limiting the trade with India to the port of London, would be illiberal to the out-ports, an invasion of the rights of individuals, and not at all conducive to the security of the revenue, while it would certainly retard its increase.

5. THAT if the Company can plead any reason whatever, for an exclusive trade to any part of Asia, that plea can be urged least of all, with respect to the trade with China, where they have neither territorial possessions, nor political influence.

6. THAT as some indemnification to the Company and their servants, would be but barely an act of justice, such an indemnification ought to be bestowed, in a way less invidious than that of a continued Monopoly.

7. THAT some scheme may be practically adopted of reconciling the continuance of the administration of their territorial concerns in the hands

of the Company, with the abrogation of their commercial privileges.

And, Lastly, That in a country such as India, with an already redundant population—having a peculiar system of laws, manners, and religion, to which they are zealously attached, colonization to any dangerous extent need not be apprehended—that if ever it should take place, *separation* from the mother country would not necessarily follow—and, that it is even doubtful if a *voluntary separation* might not be most advantageous both to this country and India.

If our Legislators shall be of a different opinion on these important points: (which it is probable they will be,) I hope at least to escape censure for obtruding on the public these few humble observations. As I shall not be mortified if I should be found to have failed, in a question where much greater talent has not succeeded, so I sincerely trust, that whatever is resolved on, may be that which will most effectually contribute to the permanent welfare of the British dominions.

LETTER FIFTEENTH.



When I had last the honour of addressing you on this interesting topic, I did not expect that another occasion would have offered of calling your attention to a farther discussion of it, from a persuasion that ere this, the question would have undergone Legislative decision. In this, however, I have been mistaken, the subject not having hitherto * engaged the attention of Parliament in a regular way, doubtless owing to the necessity his Majesty's Ministers are under of previously considering the intricate subject of East India politics and commerce, and also to ascertain the state of public opinion relative thereto, by which their own opi-

nions and procedure, must be in some degree modified.

ON a former occasion I ventured, somewhat briefly, on the question of the trade with China,* yet at the same time, as I apprehended, took a short survey of every argument by which the Company could possibly attempt to support their plea to a renewed Monopoly of this extensive and lucrative commerce, as also of the reasons of policy, which might induce the Ministry to acquiesce in their mode of stating the questions as between them and the public—and after making every allowable deduction from my own side of the argument, to satisfy scrupulous minds, the conclusions resulting from each were fairly in favour of freedom. It was also stated, that the only plea which could be urged, for continuing this Monopoly to the Company, would be that of *indemnity* to the stock-holders, lest under a free trade the successful competition of individuals might incapacitate the Company from paying their present dividends. This ground, if not taken publicly by the Directors themselves, is *occupied for them*, by their advocates, and somewhat unexpectedly, for I had verily believed, that indemnity in such a questionable shape, would hardly have been *thought*

* Letters 13th and 14th.

of by any reasonable person, at a period, and in a country, where both the principles and practice of political economy are so thoroughly understood. In this belief, however, as in many things else, I have been wrong; but in acknowledging my error, I must beg my reader to view the foundation on which I built my faith, and fairly judge between my antagonists and me, whether or not my confidence had sufficient support. If the judgment of the public shall go against me, I must strive to *unlearn* such plausible but dangerous heresies.

I had always avoided touching on the question of the Company's stock, from a desire which I have uniformly avowed of keeping distinct and separate, the consideration of the Company's commercial, from their political and territorial concerns, thus simplifying the discussion of subjects not necessarily united. But for reasons, *the very opposite*, the advocates of Monopoly strive to make one of them, in order that the country may be frightened into their measures, by the perplexing difficulties, they make them believe, must be encountered in the pursuit of their object—and this system of defence they seem to be successfully practising at this moment: for people of plain sense, who see very clearly their own interests in an open trade, yet doubt and fluctuate in their opinions, when confounded with the difficul-

ties these practised terrorists create for them. To lay a few of these bewildering phantoms, shall be the humble attempt of this epistle.

As it is pretty apparent that the British Government is virtually responsible for the whole debt of the Company, whatever it may be, would it not be equally well to assume that responsibility *directly*, than through an intermediate agency; and the more particularly, as the Directors themselves hint something of the *necessity* of it? The Indian debt is stated to be about 25 millions*, and as it is optional with the creditor, to receive payment in England, it seems morally certain that while matters remain in the present state, and interest continues low in India, the creditor will uniformly make the election of being paid in England, which will create such an overwhelming demand on the Company's Treasury at home, as will be impossible for them to satisfy. Six millions, if I mistake not, is stated to be the sum which will be required to meet the debt thus transferred this last and current year; and for which the Chancellor of the Exchequer must provide, by funding it—and thus in a few years, at all events, will the whole of the Indian debt be transferred, and the home debt will naturally follow it;

* See Correspondence, No. 24.

and whether or not the public, or the Company, should provide the interest, seems the only question, and one not of difficult decision—for if the public revenue increases with the free extension of the trade, in the proportion which I ventured to assume, I see no reason why the claims of the country should be postponed to those of a few individuals—at all events, if the public fail in producing a *revenue equal* to the Company, from this traffic, the deficiency must be made up by *themselves* in some other shape—whereas, if the revenue of the Company *fall short* of what might accrue from a free trade, the public, *not the Company*, would pay for it. This is an argument which of itself ought to be decisive in our favour. But it will be said, what is to become of the capital stock of the Company if you abolish their Monopoly? * I would answer, it is really no very weighty affair. The whole capital *actually advanced* by the proprietors, being somewhat less than seven millions sterling, just about fourteen times the capital employed in the same trade by *one* obscure individual in the state of New England, and amassed under their very eyes, though out of the reach of their controul—and not more than the capital which ten respectable British mer-

* I have considered the right they may exercise of trading as a joint stock Company, even under a free trade.

chants *could* embark in the same commerce, and without borrowing a sixpence. The sum of 7 millions, borrowed on bond, 'I am not bound to notice, as any *individual* could borrow money in a similar way. This being the state of the fact as to their stock, I can really see no difficulty in the disposal of it; and I question much, if one single proprietor would be found willing to continue his capital in a concern which yielded him little more than ordinary interest for his money, but for the *patronage* which such a connection affords him; and this I do not think any stock-holder will deny.—Except, therefore, in the article of patronage, the proprietors of Company's stock, would have little reason to complain of the transfer, though Government took their stock at par, and dissolved that co-partnery, whose *trading* concerns were *least* the objects of their regard, and from whence they derived a scarcely perceptible benefit; while their corporate existence operated an invidious proscription of their fellow-subjects, whatever might have been its effect on national prosperity; which has also been questioned. If it shall appear to the Legislature, that deprivation of the exercise of this patronage, is a proper subject of indemnity, (which, I dare say may appear so,) some measure may doubtless be substituted to compensate the want of it, in a way substantially better, and, I am certain, less humili-

liating to the country, than by extending the period of the Company's peculiar privileges. If, therefore, I have succeeded in impressing on my reader, the same degree of conviction which I *feel* on this branch of argument, it will go near to satisfy him, that the Company's debt *must* fall on the country eventually, and at no distant period—and their stock might undergo a similar transfer without material injury to its holders, and with infinite advantage to the country. It would be absurdity and injustice, to postpone the interests of the community to those of a comparatively few individuals, and especially as the public must suffer both immediate privation, and the risk of eventual loss, which these individuals may sustain. It would be rather a simple sort of bargain, for the public to run all the hazard of a loss by the China trade; while the Company enjoyed all its advantages. They may plead, that the whole of the revenue of their conquests is mortgaged for the payment of their debts, and the losses the public may sustain by them;—but this is nothing more than the plea of indemnification in a different form. Thus have I briefly stated what appeared to me to be necessary to evidence the reasonableness of the claims of the country to an unrestricted commerce with China, as also the expediency of complying with these claims; and, I trust, in perfect consistency with the opinion I have uniformly held,

that I would rather desire to see the administration of the territorial possessions and patronage of the Company continued for a time, at least, in the Court of Directors, subject to some regulation as to the relative powers to be exercised by them and the Board of Controul, than all at once to throw such an overwhelming influence *directly* into the hands of those who conduct his Majesty's Government; although I do not pretend to say that such influence may not be as unduly exercised in the one case as the other, and probably is so, yet as the influence is in different hands, and exercised for different purposes, its general effects are less dangerous in the one than in the other. Besides, throwing the experience of the Directors, and of the servants of the Company into the scale, the chance is, that affairs will be much better managed, for some time to come, by those whom practice has rendered expert, than by people whose previous habits have rendered them unfit for performing the minute details of such a complicated Government. On this point, however, I hazard an opinion with the utmost deference, although my own judgment be convinced of its soundness.

I SHALL now request the attention of my reader, to some of the most grievous injuries the commerce of the country would sustain, by the continuance of the Monopoly to China. And on this

invidious topic, I shall presume, that it is not necessary to enlarge, trusting that the wisdom of our legislature will prevent the trial of an experiment, so obviously pregnant with mischievous consequences. It would seem, that the Directors propose to fix the eastern boundary of commercial freedom, at Point Romania, the south-eastern extremity of the Peninsula of Malacca, and its northern limits at the equinoxial line. This rectangle will embrace and *hedge in*, besides the commerce of China and Japan, the whole of Siam, Cochinchina, and Tonquin, the Philippines, and two-thirds of the Island of Borneo; as also the carrying trade between the north-west coast of America, and China, of itself of some importance—thus comprehending, within the lines of exclusion, an immense tract of territory, not one inch of which the Company can claim any title to more than the meanest among his Majesty's subjects, save that sort of title which the sufferance of their countrymen has hitherto allowed them to enjoy. On each of these branches of trade, I shall offer a single remark.

THE very situation of Siam, points it out as a natural place of trade. Placed between two gulphs, and embracing a sea coast of near a thousand miles; fertile in its soil, and rich in minerals, this fine, but ill-fated country, might, under a better

Government, become the envy of the world. But its moral energies, have been for ages cramped by the most cruel and degrading of despotisms, not less fatal to trade, than to the security and happiness of mankind. Most writers agree, that at the beginning of the sixteenth century, the trade of this kingdom, was great—its importance was such, even so late as the reign of Louis XIV. as to induce that Monarch, to receive and return an embassy to that opulent state, from whence the French expected advantages, which their own imprudent conduct prevented them from ever receiving. The Dutch East India Company, drove the French from their settlements there, and carried on at one time a considerable commerce. They exchanged their European manufactures for elephant's teeth, cassia, gum lac, logwood, sappan wood, hides—likewise gold, loadstone, iron, copper, and calin—these valuable commodities were at that time produced in great quantities, but the unrelenting despotism under which the country has fallen, has banished industry from its inhabitants. The fine gum, which the Chinese and Japanese use as a Lacquer, and which we so much admire, is said to be produced in this country only; the carrying of it to those artisans, might consequently fall into the hands of the British under a free trade, toge-

ther with the other products of the soil. Besides, the fertility of the lands is such as to yield rice two hundred fold, and as the distresses of famine are frequently and severely felt in all oriental despotisms, particularly in China, the carrying of grain alone, might become a considerable branch of commerce in the hands of an enterprizing people. In its present political state, the *immediate* advantages of an open commerce would be probably few, but frequency of intercourse might bring about a change favourable both to the general interests of commerce, and the happiness of the human race. What has been said of the political state of Siam, may equally apply to Cochin-china, and the state of its commerce is not very different. Its gold mines are more abundant, and that metal is found finer here than any where in the world. Its other productions are nearly the same as those of Siam, and the little trade it enjoys, is in the hands of a people little qualified to carry it on, viz. the Chinese*.

The Spanish colony of the Manillas, or Philippine Islands, is subordinate to the Vice-royalty

* I must refer my reader for farther information to Mr. Barrow's account of Cochin-china, Abbe Raynal's History and Voyages to the East Indies, &c.

of Mexico, and known to Europeans, chiefly from its being the medium of communication between the eastern and western world, and the centre of the commerce of both countries. The articles, however, which it exports to Acapulca, and other places in America, are not the products of its own soil, or of the industry of its inhabitants, but collected from every part of Asia, in exchange, chiefly, for the precious metals. The native population of these Islands is rated variously, but may probably amount to about a million and a half—the people of colour to ten or twelve thousand, and the Spaniards to about five thousand souls. In the hands of the two latter classes, are placed the lives and destinies of the former, and they are not free from the accusation of abusing such absolute authority. As in every other Spanish colony, trade is subjected to such absurd and vexatious restrictions, to such arbitrary and capricious exactions, that it is more to be wondered, that they enjoy any trade whatever, than that it is not greater, which under better management it might easily be. A similar cause prevents the exertion of every sort of industry; for people will scarcely attempt to acquire that wealth, which, when acquired, cannot be secured to them, nor toil for those comforts, of which the caprice of an unfeeling petty despot, may in a moment deprive them. The period, however, is probably now arrived, when these fine

countries shall be roused from that moral and political torpor, in which they have slumbered for ages, to the enjoyment of those substantial blessings which rational liberty, and its concomitants, confer on mankind *. Under a better Government, it is impossible to contemplate, to what extent the trade with these Islands might be carried. Equidistant from the shores of Africa and America, and surrounded by the most wealthy states of Asia, they might become the centre of the commerce of all of them, and instead of exhibiting the marked appearance of oppression, indolence, and poverty, they might speedily attain to freedom, industry, and opulence. Under more enlightened regulations, our traders might be readi-

* It is but a bare act of justice to the English East India Company to notice, that to their honour, their conduct, questionable as it has been, has remained less contaminated with offences against morality, and less stained with violations of the laws of immutable justice, than any other of the corporate establishments, which have successively enthralled the Asiatic states. Even the attempts of their servants to propagate the Christian religion, exhibit, probably, evidence of greater morality than *policy*. I regret, however, to perceive, that the *example* of the Directors is rather calculated to inspire diffidence in their professions, on the subject of religion. In the papers lately printed, one of their long communications with the Earl of Buckinghamshire, is dated *Sunday the of April*.

Probably the extreme *fear* of losing their *temporalities* has tempted them to this breach of the Christian Decalogue.

ly supplied here with the precious metals they require for the commerce of India and China, while they furnished the Spaniards with articles of European manufacture, so necessary as a return for their American imports. But whether the present fervour which agitates these colonies, will end in a way so favourable to the interests and happiness of mankind, time alone can reveal. In the mean time let not *us* by our own acts obstruct such a happy consummation.

THE fur trade between the North-West coast of America, and Canton in China, is already known to be very advantageous, and might have engaged a vast proportion of British capital and shipping, but for the existence of the Company's Monopoly, which prevented them from returning direct to Europe with the products of that Empire, exchanged for their American cargoes.* Owing

* I am happy in having it in my power to quote, on this branch of my subject, the opinion of a distinguished traveller, Sir A. MacKenzie, whose evidence will be received with less hesitation from his having been actually engaged in the traffic, which he furnishes an account of. In that Gentleman's introductory History of the fur trade, the following passage occurs:

“ Of these (skins) were diverted from the British market, being sent through the United States to China, 13,364 skins, fine beaver, weighing 19,283 pounds; 1250 fine otters, and

to such a circumstance, this lucrative commerce is thrown chiefly into the hands of the Americans, who absolutely obtain their furs from *British subjects* in Canada, by whom they are collected, and to whom again they sell *their teas* in return. In this manner are the rights of British merchants

1724 kitt foxes. They would have found their way to the China market at any rate, but this deviation from the British channel arose from the following circumstance :

“ An adventure of this kind was undertaken by a respectable house in London, half concerned with the North-West Company, in the year 1792. The furs were of the best kind, and suitable to the market ; and the adventurers continued this connection for five successive years, to the annual amount of forty thousand pounds. At the winding up of the concern of 1792, 1793, 1794, 1795, in the year 1797, (the adventure of 1796 not being included, as the furs were not sent to China, but disposed of in London,) the North-West Company experienced a loss of upwards of 40,000*l.* (their half) which was principally owing to the difficulty of getting home the produce procured in return for the furs from China, in the East India Company's ships, together with the duty payable, and the various restrictions of that Company. Whereas, from America there are no impediments ; they get immediately to market, and the produce of them is brought back, and perhaps sold in the course of twelve months. From such advantages the furs of Canada will no doubt find their way to China by America, *which would not be the case if British subjects had the same privileges that are allowed to foreigners*, as London would then be found the best and safest market”.—M'Kenzie's Travels, Introduction, page 24.

yearly sacrificed ; whereas, under a free trade, ships might proceed direct, round Cape Horn to Noo ka Sound, there exchange their European manufactures for the furs with which that country abounds ; from thence across the Pacific to China, where they again would exchange their cargoes for teas, for the markets of Europe. Thus performing a double voyage, and circumnavigating the globe, in little more time than the Company's ships take to perform their stated voyages to China alone. At all events, the trade in this article would be immense through Canada, if no obstructions existed in the provision of return cargoes from China direct, the *sole* cause of its being so much neglected at present.

I would, therefore, with deference, conclude, that the exclusive grant of the China trade to the Company, would not only be of no *advantage* to the nation, but would prove a positive and certain national *loss* ; whereas its abrogation, would be no act of injustice to the Company, and of certain and incalculable benefit to the whole empire. If my reader shall be of a different opinion, I must crave his pardon for this tedious trespass on his patience.

FINIS.

CORRESPONDENCE
OF
MESSRS. ABBOTT, PARRY, AND
MAITLAND,
WITH
THE HONOURABLE
THE COURT OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY,
ON THE SUBJECT OF
A PROTEST,
SIGNED BY
TWO DISTINGUISHED MEMBERS OF
THE COURT.

AUDI ALIQUAM PARTEM.

Hear a part, and then let Justice hold the Scale

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY JOYCE GOLD, 103, SHOE-LANE,
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1813.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following Letter, with its Appendix, was forwarded by the last ships from Madras, for the purpose of publication in this country; with a design, which, it is hoped, will be accomplished, of affording a pure defence against some erroneous statements that have gone forth to the world under the sanction of great names, and of removing an impression from the public mind, prejudicial to the living reputation of the Writers of

ADVERTISEMENT.

the Letter, and injurious to the sacred memory of the dead.—The Editor of these Papers thought it necessary to observe thus much in explanation of his own motive.---
The Letter will speak for itself.

TO THE HONOURABLE

THE DIRECTORS

OF THE

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

HONOURABLE SIRS,

A PAPER, containing a minute from two respectable members of your Honourable Court, in which our conduct with regard to some late trials at Madras, for forgery and perjury, is very severely arraigned, having been laid before the House of Commons, we feel it a duty we owe to ourselves and to the memory of our much-lamented friend and relative, the late Mr. Roebuck, to address this Letter to your Honourable Court. And as we are persuaded that the charges brought against us are founded in error, arising from misrepresentations made by interested persons, we trust you will not deem it a disrespect to your Honourable Court

collectively, or to any of the members of it individually, if we publish this our vindication to our country.

We must also entreat you to bear in mind the cruel manner in which our characters have been defamed for the last three years, and the severe obloquy we have, in consequence, laboured under from your Honourable Court; with what asperity we have been animadverted upon in Parliament; and how atrociously we have been libelled in a well-known pamphlet ascribed to Mr. Buchan: and we trust that, in consideration of the tortured state of our feelings upon this subject, you will forgive us, if, in vindicating ourselves, and exposing the errors which the honourable gentlemen above mentioned have been led into, we should appear to depart in the slightest degree from the respect and decorum which ought to characterize every address to your Honourable Court. It is not our intention to do so. But we claim the undoubted right of men, who have been falsely accused and grievously injured, freely to assert the truth in their own justification.

In order to trespass as little upon your time as possible, we shall only notice such parts of the minute contained in the paper in question, and of the Appendix annexed to it, as relate immediately to ourselves, and those connected with us ; and such as tend to bring to light the motives of others concerned in this question. And that we may place our justification in the clearest point of view, we shall take the liberty of quoting such parts separately, and of sub-joining our reply to each.

It would be presumption in us to notice that part of the minute which relates to General Macdowall, and to the opinions of Mr. Petrie upon the subject of the address and service of plate presented to him, did not the minute itself connect General Macdowall with those that are therein denominated “ persons in open opposition to government,” of which, in a subsequent part, we have been described as the leaders ; and had we not learned from unquestionable authority that Mr. Roebuck had rendered himself particularly obnoxious to Sir George Barlow, and to some members of your Honourable Court by the part

he had taken in that address and subscription.

That the address to General Macdowall had no reference to his public conduct, as connected with government, has been already shewn to your Honourable Court. The dates of the meeting at which the address was proposed; of the delivery of the address; and of the arrest of Colonel Monro, which caused the difference between the government and commander in chief, establish this fact most incontestibly. Mr. Roebuck was not present at the meeting above referred to, nor was he chairman of the first public meeting that was held on the subject. It was Colonel Hare, commanding officer of his Majesty's 22d regiment of dragoons, and since commanding officer of the centre division of the army.

The minute says, "the names which appear to the address, with the exception of two or three military men who may have had personal obligations or attachment, are clearly of the description just mentioned." To this we shall beg leave to reply, by quoting the names of only a

few of those who subscribed the address, and to the service of plate; from which your Honourable Court will be able to judge of the motives and character of the whole proceeding.

JOHN KENWORTHY,
Member of the Board of Trade;

HENRY DAVIS,
Lieut.-colonel H. M. 22d. reg. dragoons, and commanding officer of Mysore;

JOHN CAMPBELL,
Lieut.-colonel H. M. 33d reg. and paymaster of the King's troops;

The Reverend **EDWARD VAUGHAN,**
Senior chaplain of Fort St. George;

COLIN MCKENZIE,
Lieut.-colonel of engineers, and surveyor-general;

WILLIAM HAWKINS,
Collector of Masulipatam;

ROBERT ANDREWS,
Acting judge of circuit, southern division;

Sir **WILLIAM NICHOLSON, Bart.**
Deputy adjutant general of the King's troops;

H. AUSTIN,
Major H. M. 59th reg.

RICHARD YELDHAM,
Sub-treasurer and secretary of the government bank;

MUNGO DICK,
Member of the board of trade, and superintendant of Investment;

J. D. WHITE,
Physician to Sir G. Barlow's family ;

FREDERICK GAHAGAN,
Secretary of government ;

The **OFFICERS** of H. M. 59th regiment ;

Major-general **FULLER,**
One of H. M.'s generals on the staff of India ;

JAMES HARE,
Lieut.-colonel commanding H. M.'s 22d reg. of dragoons ;

ARTHUR GORE,
Lieut.-colonel commanding H. M.'s 33d regiment ;

E. W. FALLOWFIELD,
Many years third member of council at the presidency of
Fort St. George ;

The **OFFICERS** of H. M.'s 25th reg. of dragoons ;

The **OFFICERS** of H. M.'s 12th regiment ;

Sir **CHARLES BURDETT, Bart.**
Brigade-major of the King's troops.

APPENDIX.—"The nabobs of the Carnatic had carefully kept registers of the bonds granted by them, and payments on account of them, in offices appropriated to that purpose. After their death, to prevent those registers from being falsified, the offices were shut up."

OBSERVATION.—It was proved in the trial, upon the evidence of the commissioners themselves, that when the records of the Durbar were carried to their office,

they were in a loose and neglected state, and that many of the boxes containing them were without locks, others without keys.

It was proved in an examination of the present Nabob before the Commissioners, that, subsequent to the death of the late Omdut Ul Omrah, he had himself ordered many bonds to be put upon the register, and among them, the identical forged bond which was the subject matter of the first trial.

It was proved before the commissioners, by the confession of the three principal witnesses on the part of the defence in the three trials, that all the documents produced from the records of the Durbar in support of the defence, were forgeries, and had been interpolated by them at the instigation of Reddy Row. To dismiss this part of the subject at once, and with it the question of the guilt or innocence of Reddy Row, Anunda Row, and Mr. Batley, we shall here add, that the same witnesses have deposed upon oath, that all the evidence which they had given upon the three trials was false and perjured, that Anunda Row had never been em-

ployed as a clerk at the Durbar; and that they had been instigated to these repeated acts of perjury by the threats and promises of Reddy Row.

APPENDIX.—“The committee having on the 25th June 1808 been directed to examine into the charge against Paupiah, for fabricating a bond for 46,000 pagodas, they, on the 11th July, reported, that it was a forgery, and recommended that the parties concerned in it should be prosecuted.”

OBS.—Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Orme, the law officers of the company, deeply interested in the fate of Reddy Row, and consequently bent upon the destruction of Paupiah, and of all who should attempt to impeach Reddy Row's credit, were the leading persons of this committee.

APPENDIX.—“On the 12th July, a letter dated the 9th was laid before the commissioners by Mr. Abbott, containing a list of bonds stated by him to be suspicious, among which was this one of Reddy Row's.”

OBS.—As no remark is made upon this fact, nor any inference drawn from it; and as it does not appear to connect with what

precedes or follows, we are not aware of the tendency of the mention of it; but with regard to the information contained in that letter, we beg leave to refer your Honourable Court to the commissioners, and you will find that there is not a single bond in that list which has been examined, that has not proved to be a forgery, by the acknowledgment of the commissioners themselves.

APPENDIX.—“The commissioners, to whom the deed sanctioned by Parliament meant exclusively to confine the judgment of such points, on opening their commission, in the first place examined carefully into the solidity of this bond, and were thoroughly satisfied on what they deemed the clearest evidence, that it was a genuine one, not only the reality of the nabob’s signature, but the reasonable grounds on which the bond was granted having been proved.”

Obs.—We beg leave to refer your Honourable Court to our reply to the first extract from the Appendix.

APPENDIX.—“It was here given in evidence to the commissioners that Paupiah had offered to Reddy Row to withdraw his charge of forgery, and settle their

regarding it. Their sole duty, we conceive is, to examine the accounts and vouchers adduced in support of, or against, claims upon the late nabobs; and to report upon them to the commissioners in England. We are not aware that they have any jurisdiction over felonies and misdemeanours. The deed of covenant could not, the act of Parliament does not, give it to them. All that the latter has done, is, to empower them to administer oaths, and to enforce obedience to their precepts by commitment for contempt. It is their province to decide in the first instance upon the truth or falsity of any claim, but their decision cannot prevent the operation of the law. Had these gentlemen decided rightly at first, and rejected this claim as a fraudulent one, as they have since been compelled to do; still it would have been competent to any man to prosecute the delinquents for the forgery. It surely never can be seriously contended, that as long as no false claims are admitted, it is indifferent whether such baneful crimes as forgery and perjury pass unpunished or not. We trespass upon

your Honourable Court with these palpable and self-evident truths, because a notion has gone abroad, and indeed it has been promulgated by very high authority, that *the commissioners having determined upon the validity of the bond in question, it was not competent to his Majesty's courts of judicature to take cognizance of the matter—*

Although we must in candour acknowledge that this doctrine was afterwards retracted. But if it had been the intention of the legislature that this commission should supersede the jurisdiction of his Majesty's courts of judicature in all matters touching claims upon the nabobs of the Carnatic, we must be allowed to remark that the advocates for the commissioners and law officers cannot with any consistency aninadvert upon the prosecution of Reddy Row as a contravention of this design, since they themselves assume that those gentlemen had first, in order of time, resolved upon indicting Paupiah.

APPENDIX.—“ One of the commissioners attended Mr. Maitland, and offered to communicate to him the contradictory evidence which the ~~same~~ accusers

had given before, to them in this matter ; but Mr. Maitland refused to receive the depositions taken before the commissioners, or to examine the deposing parties himself."

OBS.—Upon reference to the letter from the clerk to the justices under date the 26th July 1808, to the commissioners, your Honourable Court will see that it was Mr. Maitland himself who applied for the production of these informations at the public office. He read them with attention, and found nothing in them that at all repelled the charge laid in the information against Reddy Row. But whatsoever were the contents of them, he would have proved himself grossly ignorant of the duties of his office, if he had received as evidence in a criminal prosecution, informations taken before the commissioners for investigating the debts of the nabobs of the Carnatic. With respect to the witnesses themselves, Mr. Maitland denies that they were tendered to him for examination ; and in confirmation of this assertion, we may add, that Mr. Anstruther did not think it prudent to call them upon the trial. Major Thompson and Mr. Oli-

ver were tendered as witnesses. These gentlemen were members of Mr. Anstruther's committee, where he and Mr. Orme, the Company's solicitor, officiated as president and secretary, to decide upon the merits of the man, by whose aid and undue influence in the commissioners' office, they expected to get their own bonds passed. They declared to Mr. Maitland, that they knew nothing of the particular charge under investigation, and of course he dispensed with their further attendance. The production of these witnesses was a mere trick, to dazzle and impose upon the public at least, if not the magistrate, by the respectability of their names and characters. Major Thompson was examined upon the trial, and there proved what he had before asserted, that he knew nothing of the matter. Mr. Oliver was upon the two special juries that tried and convicted Batley and Reddy Row, and was immediately after deprived of his situations at Madras.

APPENDIX.—“ Mr. Maitland has since avowed himself to be a prosecutor in the same matter in which he then acted as a magistrate, and to be interested in the event.”

Obs.—We declare most solemnly to your Honourable Court, that, when the prosecution commenced, and for some time after, we had not the most remote intention of interfering in it; nor should we ever have done it, had it not been for the most extraordinary and unnatural combination that was formed, to screen from justice, men who were the notorious authors of numerous frauds and forgeries. Mr. Maitland was no further interested in the event of the trial than any other creditor. His interest might, in fact, have amounted to about one fortieth per cent. of the amount of the claims in which he has any concern. And, as to his being a prosecutor in the same matter in which he then acted as magistrate; admitting, for the sake of argument, the fact; no exception to his commitment was taken either by the judge, the grand jury, or the defendants. After committing the parties, he had no further concern with the trial. His col-

league, Mr. Taswell, examined and committed some men for the forgery of a bond for fifty thousand pagodas, of which he was himself the actual proprietor, and the law-officers were employed to conduct the prosecution. Not only no blame was imputed to him for this act, but he has been commended for his exertions to bring the delinquents to justice. What was laudable in Mr. Taswell, could not have been culpable in Mr. Maitland. The difference of their respective merits consisted only in this, that the one exerted himself to condemn his own property ; the other, in the indispensable discharge of his duty, contributed to the condemnation of that, in which, and the nominal owner of which, the law-officers and their associates had so deep an interest. .

APPENDIX.—“ The complaint of the commissioners against Arnachella Row and Beemah Row for perjury, having been heard by Mr. Taswell, another magistrate, he committed them for trial.”

OBS.—He did so, and the bill of indictment was thrown out by the grand jury.

It was preferred again at the following sessions, and after the conviction of Mr. Batley, which seemed to extinguish all their hopes, the law-officers withdrew it. A third attempt was, nevertheless, made at the Quarter Sessions of last July, and with the same success.

APPENDIX.—“ In the first list of Nabobs’ debts made up in 1806, (the late Nabob died in 1801) the amount of claims standing in the names of Messrs. Abbott and Maitland, as principals and agents, was £68,847. The amount standing in the name of Paupiah was £620,146. In the last account, the claims of these two persons, of Messrs. Roebuck and Parry, and of Paupiah, as principals and agents (including a claim of Mr. Abbott’s on behalf of a Begum for 25 lacks of pagodas) amounted to 67 lacks of pagodas, or £2,680,000, being full two thirds of the whole amount at first estimated to be due to a most numerous list of subscribers.”

OBS.—We shall not remark upon this compendious mode of stating the amount of our claims, nor upon the jumble that is made of our own claims, those of our constituents, and of those of the Begum and Paupiah, further than that we have no-

thing to do with Paupiah's claims. Whatever claims are in our own names, will be supported by the Durbar Records. We cannot be responsible for those assigned over to Mr. Roebuck, nor for those of our constituents. Mr. Abbott was many years secretary to the Nabob Omdut Ul Omrah, and thus became known to all the branches of that family; and, on that account, he was solicited to undertake the agency of the Begum's claims. He examined the vouchers in support of them. He believed them to be good and solid; and he accepted the office. If the claims shall ultimately appear to the commissioners in England to be well-founded, they will be admitted notwithstanding their magnitude. If otherwise, he will, at least, have the consolation of reflecting that he has discharged his duty to his constituents faithfully and diligently, and that he has not resorted to any undue means to get the claims passed.

APPENDIX.—“ It was alleged also that Mr. Anstruther, the advocate-general, who had been directed to conduct the defence of Reddy Row, was hint-

self concerned in the property of the bond which that person was charged with having forged. Mr. Anstruther has, in our opinion, completely cleared his own honour in that matter."

Obs.—As the fact is not here denied, and it is not stated in what manner Mr. Anstruther has cleared his own honour to the satisfaction of the honourable gentlemen who have subscribed the minute, we can only affirm generally, that Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Orme, the honourable company's solicitor, the late Mr. Walter Grant, Messrs. Binny and Dennison, Mr. Arbuthnot, Dr. Berry, the late Mr. Halyburton, and a native of the name of Yagamberam, were concerned together in a speculation in Nabobs' bonds, amounting in principal and interest, to about twenty-five lacks of pagodas, or one million sterling, purchased partly from Reddy Row, and partly on his recommendation. No claims have appeared in the names of Mr. Anstruther and Mr. Orme, but the executors of Mr. Grant (Mr. Arbuthnot and Mr. Orme) claimed for the estate upwards of eight lacks of pagodas. Another portion of this concern was claimed by Messrs. Binny

and Dennison; another by Reddy Row, in which was included the bond in question, as given in evidence before the commissioners by Mr. Binny; part by Dr. Berry, and a considerable part by the late Mr. Halyburton. We do not know whether the partners had an equal share in the whole concern; nor whether each had some concern in every bond; but it is notorious to the whole settlement that they were generally concerned; and particularly that Mr. Anstruther, Mr. Orme, and the late Mr. Grant, had sunk a considerable sum of money in this hazardous speculation, for we do not believe there will be found one good bond in the whole concern. We submit to the candour and judgment of your Honourable Court, whether it was prudent in the commissioners and the government to act upon these occasions, upon the advice of the law-officers, circumstanced as they were.

APPENDIX.—“ Mr Elphinstone has denied, that, in these proceedings, there was any connection between the four European creditors and Paupiah. But we conceive that the very nature and order of

the events above described, irresistibly establish such a connection; and besides, it is avowed by Messrs. Parry, Abbott, and Maitland, that they paid the expence of the suit brought in the Supreme Court, in the name of Paupiah against Reddy Row; as it is also known that Mr. Parry was Paupiah's bail in the action brought against him and another person for perjury."

Obs.—We again most distinctly deny for ourselves and for Mr. Roebuck, all association, connection, and concern, whatsoever, with Paupiah in this, or any other matter; and to prove to your Honourable Court what very incorrect information has been communicated to the honourable gentlemen who entered the minute, Paupiah never was indicted for perjury. Such an intention was announced by the commissioners to the justices of the peace on the 26th of July 1808, but never carried into effect. Mr. Roebuck and Messrs. Abbott and Maitland, never at any time had any concern with Paupiah whatsoever. Mr. Parry had formerly large mercantile and pecuniary transactions with him. When Paupiah was prosecuted at the instance of government for a conspiracy and forgery

(not perjury) he falsely apprehended that no native of sufficient substance would dare to be his bail, and in this distress applied to Mr. Parry, who complied with his request. Happy had it been for this settlement, if all associations had been equally innocent!!! But so far was Mr. Parry from having any concern with Paupiah in this trial, he was absent from Madras during the whole of the time, and for some time subsequent to it, and of course was not at Madras when the bills of indictment against Batley for perjury, and against Batley and Reddy Row for conspiracy and forgery, were presented to and found by the grand jury. Mr. Parry had left Madras principally on account of the impaired state of his health; and he solemnly declares that, during his absence, he had not any communication whatever with Paupiah, or any other person at Madras, respecting the trial of Reddy Row and Anunda Row. We take this opportunity of acquainting your Honourable Court, that the above-mentioned indictment against Paupiah never was brought to trial. It lay over by consent in the first

larly took their seats with them, as if they had been their professional attorneys. For the truth of this fact, we appeal to the whole settlement: and we submit to your Honourable Court, whether such conduct savoured more of the dignity and impartiality of judges, or of the petty interests and passions of partisans. We never had any communication with them, except to apply at two different times for copies of informations taken before them, to which we were entitled by the letter and spirit of the deed of covenant; the first of which applications they readily complied with, and the second they refused at the instance of the law-officers. And with respect to the opposition to government; we cannot comprehend in what view of the interests of the Honourable Company, or of the well-being of society; by what possible construction of the powers and prerogatives of the government; or in what distorted sense of the intent and design of the King's Court of Judicature, the prosecution of public wrongs in that court can be considered as an act of opposition to government. On the contrary, we think

ourselves justified in affirming, that Sir George Barlow, by his unconstitutional interference, himself raised an opposition to the pure administration of justice.

APPENDIX.—“ These persons went at length so far as to apply to the governor-general in council for the removal of the commissioners, and also to threaten those commissioners with a criminal prosecution; which violent course, on the other hand, induced a very respectable body, comprehending the principal commercial characters of Madras to bear in a voluntary address to the commissioners, the most honourable testimony to the uprightness of their conduct, with which also the Madras government expressed the highest satisfaction.”

OBS.—With submission to your Honourable Court: In all matters regarding the deed of covenant, and the commissioners appointed under it, although it is provided that these shall be nominated by the governor-general in council, yet we do not consider ourselves in relation to government, merely as subjects to their rulers, but as parties to that deed which was intended to secure to us certain rights. And as we thought that the commissioners were not acting impartially, and that we should

in consequence be deprived of the benefit of the deed, we conceive that we had a right to protest against them, and that it was the regular and legal mode of proceeding. With regard to the threat of a criminal prosecution in the Supreme Court, we acted upon the advice of our counsel, who was afterwards of opinion that we should move the court for a writ of mandamus, to compel the commissioners to furnish us with copies of such papers as we should require; which was accordingly done. The motion was fully argued upon the 4th of April 1809, but we were never able to obtain the judgment of the court upon it. As to the voluntary address to the commissioners, your Honourable Court will be better able to appreciate it, when you shall be informed that the associates in the speculation with the law-officers, were the movers of it; and that one house alone that subscribed it, claimed more than one crore of pagodas, or 4,000,000, sterling, upon bonds, the greater part of which, if not the whole, have already been thrown out as forgeries. Upon reference to the registers of claims published by the

Madras commissioners, your Honourable Court will be able to satisfy yourselves of the fact,

APPENDIX. “ That government, at last, in order to prevent the obstruction of the business entrusted to the commissioners, and to check the spirit of faction, which had become very general and outrageous in the settlement; found it necessary to interpose, by removing Mr. Maitland from the magistracy, which his partiality in office justly deserved; by requiring Mr. Parry, who remained in India on sufferance, to return to Europe; and by appointing Mr. Roebuck, who held considerable offices at the presidency, to the charge of the settlement in Vizagapatam, said to be one of the most salubrious on the coast; where his subsequent death, at the age of sixty, has been represented by some persons as murder.”

Obs.—As we are ignorant what instances of a “general and outrageous spirit of faction,” in the settlement have been communicated to the honourable members who entered this minute, we can make no other reply to this charge, than that we observed none at the time, and have never heard one cited since. And it is highly improbable that a society of men, all of whom are dependent upon the East India Company,

and very few interested in the events in question, would set up a factious opposition to your government of Madras, for the furtherance of our designs. And we must take the liberty of remarking upon the entire discrepancy between this allegation, and the fact cited in the foregoing extract, namely, "The voluntary address from a very respectable body, comprehending the principal commercial characters of Madras, to the commissioners." It may be presumption in us to comment upon the severe and unjust punishment inflicted by Sir George Barlow upon Mr. Roebuck; and upon the construction put upon it by the honourable authors of the minute: we trust, nevertheless, we shall be forgiven; for we were connected with Mr. Roebuck by many dear and honourable ties. He suffered with us, and in fact, for us: for we declare most solemnly to your Honourable Court, that he had no participation whatsoever with us in the protest against the commissioners: nor in the other acts, whether culpable or otherwise, which the commissioners made the foundation of their complaint against us to go-

vernment, on the 6th of February 1809, and in which they forcibly introduced his name, for the obvious purpose of justifying (if it can be so called) the vengeance which Sir George Barlow had long before determined to wreak upon him and us, for having dared to resort to the laws of our country, in opposition to his will. Nothing more is necessary to verify this imputation against the commissioners than their own letter of the 3d of February, a copy of which we have the honour to annex, in which, so far from considering our application for copies of papers, a fit subject of complaint, they readily complied with it. In these letters your Honourable Court will likewise see the more than suspicious discordance of opinions expressed by these gentlemen regarding the verdict of the special jury, at two distinct, but not remote, periods: upon which we have only further to observe, that, whatever change the resolution of the chief justice might have produced in their sentiments, it could not, by any rules of reason or justice, have affected the merits of our previous conduct, and could not, of course, have jus-

tified the complaint above alluded to. But to return to the painful subject, from which we have so long digressed ; we trust we shall be forgiven for remarking that the manner in which Mr. Roebuck's removal is described, namely, *that he was appointed to take charge of the settlement in Vizagapatam*, would lead strangers to imagine, that he had been placed in the respectable post of *Chief of Vizagapatam*, with a salary and emoluments proportionate to its importance ; so that although political expediency had occasioned his removal from the presidency, yet he had neither suffered degradation in respect of his situation nor diminution of his pecuniary advantages ; whereas, in fact, he was removed from two really important offices, the mint, and that of military paymaster general, from which he drew a salary of 1000 pagodas per month, to that of commercial resident, with a salary of 120 pagodas per month, and a trifling commission upon a fluctuating and precarious investment. But although it is not expressly avowed, it is very well known that this removal was intended as a punishment ;

and all the settlement remarked it as a most vindictive one ; in which Sir George Barlow violated the law, the maxims of natural equity, and the express and repeated orders of your Honourable Court, *that no civil servant be deprived of his office, or otherwise punished, without being first furnished with a copy of the charge preferred against him, and being allowed a reasonable time to make his defence.* Your Honourable Court know, that Mr. Roebuck received a peremptory order immediately to deliver over charge of his two offices at Madras, and to proceed to Vizagapatam ; likewise that he unavailingly solicited, in the most respectful manner, to be made acquainted with the cause of his heavy punishment. It is said that he was sixty years of age— This is a mistake ; he was not more than fifty-six. It is not for the sake of cavilling, that we point out this mistake, but because his age is evidently thrown out to insinuate that he died in the common course of nature. But surely it cannot be said that sixty years (allowing that to have been his age) is the natural period of human life : and the whole settlement will

acknowledge, that few men, even among his juniors, equalled Mr. Roebuck in bodily and mental activity. *There never was a doubt in this country, that his unmerited harsh treatment was the cause of his death.*

APPENDIX.—“ The trial lasted near a month, five days of which were lost by the intoxication of some members of the petty jury, which was in general composed of the lowest order of Europeans.”

Obs.—We are obliged to point out here another instance of the very incorrect information communicated to the Honourable Authors of the minute. The trial lasted only sixteen days, and there was an interruption of two days on account of the indisposition of one of the jurors. He was taken ill in court, and Doctor Davies, who was present, visited him by desire of the chief justice, and declared him to be in a high fever. The jury consisted of the most respectable tradesmen in Madras, and of the assistants and clerks in the first offices under government. The same jury, at the same sessions, were highly complimented by the chief justice for *their sagacity and*

penetration, to which he attributed the salvation of the life of an innocent man, who was tried for murder, and the conviction of the two persons who had actually committed the murder, and had' falsely accused the other man of it. We appeal to the chief justice for the truth of this fact.

APPENDIX.—“The chief justice having adjourned one day to arrange his notes of the evidence, was afterwards, by indisposition, prevented from attending several days more; which was made the ground of an application to the grand jury, then sitting, for a charge of impeachment against that eminent Magistrate.”

OBS.—There is one insuperable objection to this statement, namely, it stands upon testimony that is ipso facto tainted and unworthy of credit, inasmuch as it could not have been communicated without the violation of an oath. With regard, however, to the pretended ground of application to the grand jury, we beg leave to observe, that if there is any reason in the principle of our law which prescribes, “*that no separation of the jury shall take place until they*

shall have returned their verdict ; . and that this principle is never to be departed from except in cases of absolute physical necessity," the adjournment for nine days here alluded to, combined with all the other extraordinary circumstances attending the trial, must have excited very serious alarm in the minds of the British part of the settlement. As to the cause assigned for the lengthened adjournment, we dare not dispute the truth of it, nor can we take upon ourselves to say what precise degree of bodily indisposition is sufficient to incapacitate the chief justice for the discharge of his public duties, and nevertheless leaves him capable of the enjoyment of social pleasure, and of attention to private business ; but we will state facts. On the second day of the adjournment (the 30th of November), the chief justice was present, together with Sir George Barlow, at a ball and supper given by the commander-in-chief, General Macdowall. And on the seventh, which was an uncommonly rainy and tempestuous day, he went from his country house, at the distance of three miles, to his chambers in the fort, and

there transacted his ordinary business, and had a conference with the law officers.

APPENDIX.—“ The chief justice summed up in a speech of eight hours, drawing a result in favour of the defendants, and particularly dwelling on the documents produced by the witnesses on both sides, from the Durbar offices, as unanswerable and conclusive.”

QBS.—We have seen with some surprise, this fact of the extraordinary length of the summing up very emphatically noticed in another publication. We say *with some surprise*, because we apprehend a very different conclusion might reasonably be drawn from it, than what is there intended. In the latter part of the above sentence, we imagine, there ~~must have~~ been an error of the press, for, “ *if the documents produced by the witnesses on both sides, from the Durbar offices, were unanswerable and conclusive,*” we are at a loss to divine how the chief justice could have drawn from them a result favourable to either side.

APPENDIX.—“ In the first trial, the prosecutors had insisted that Anunda Row (principal witness for

Reddy Row), who was stated by himself, by Mr. Batley, and others, to have been a writer in the nabob's Durbar in the year 1799, was, indeed, at that very time, a clerk in the Cutcherry of Manargoody, near Cuddalore. It was proved, on the defence, that Anunda Row at Manargoody was, a different person. To investigate thoroughly, in view to the new trial, this fact on which the charge of perjury rested, a gentleman well versed in the native languages was sent by government to the spot. He ascertained, from the unanimous testimony of a considerable number of inhabitants, that the Anunda Row who had given evidence at the trial, and who was shewn to them, was not the person who had resided at Manargoody."

OBS.—We are obliged to point out here another most unaccountable mistake. Anunda Row was not a witness for Reddy Row in the first trial. He was an accomplice; arraigned, tried, and convicted with him of the conspiracy and forgery. We have only further to remark upon this paragraph; that it was proved in the first trial that Anunda Row had been employed between four and five years in the Cutcherry of Chellumbrum, and only five or six months in that of Manargoody; and that notwithstanding, Mr. Sanders, who was nominated upon this unconstitutional

mission, was directed to go to the latter place instead of the former : and that the defendant himself, then under his recognizance, and another man, an agent of Reddy Row's, preceded him to Manargoddy ; for what purpose it is not difficult to conjecture : and it will be as little difficult for your Honourable Court to calculate the effect that such a mission from the government itself must have had upon the inhabitants of an inconsiderable village under their own dominion.

APPENDIX.—“ On the motion for a new trial, the counsel for the prosecution insisted, that it was a violation of the rights of juries to question the verdict on the ground of any opinion given by the judge as to the weight of evidence ; which doctrine being contrary to the current of authorities for the last half century, was resented by the chief justice as an attempt to influence the by-standers, among whom were many of the special jury, already struck for the approaching trials.”

OBS.—Sir Henry Russell, the learned chief justice of Bengal, in passing judgment upon the defendant, in a trial that occurred a short time before the period in question, said as follows ; viz. “ Whether I should

have found the same verdict, I will not pretend to say ; but it would be presumption in me to say the jury have done wrong. In matters of law, it is our duty to inform and direct the jury, but as to facts, and the conclusions to be drawn from them, they are as competent as any of us to judge, and it is their peculiar province to decide. When, therefore, twelve honest, sensible men, differ from me in opinion, in such a case as this, I think it most probable that they are right, and that I am wrong."

These are the sentiments of a constitutional British lawyer ; and they are, we apprehend, in strict conformity to the spirit and practice of British laws, ever since the establishment of the trial by jury.

In a charge lately delivered to the grand jury by that learned judge, Sir James Mackintosh, the late recorder of Bombay, he described the verdict of a jury as the "*highest proof known to the law of England ;*" adding these memorable words ; "*I must be allowed to confess, that the first feelings of youth, ratified and sanctioned by the experience of mature life, lead me peculiarly to*

cherish that most dear and venerable mode of administeting justice by grand and petty juries." Whether the expression of this sentiment was excited by any observations which this truly learned and virtuous judge had made upon the late proceedings in this unhappy settlement, we know not ; but it is so eminently opposed to the contempt which has been openly, and even exultingly, avowed for the verdicts of the most respectable grand and petty juries of this place, that we could not forbear noticing it.

In reply to the latter part of the above paragraph, we cannot pretend to dispute the correctness of it ; we can only say, that we were in court, listened attentively to all the proceedings, and heard no such speech from the chief justice. But with regard to the effect, we do not apprehend, that the discussion of an abstract question of the rights of juries could influence the judgment of the by-standers with respect to the guilt or innocence of the persons who were thereafter to be tried ; although it might, and indeed it were desirable, that it should have enlightened them in the exercise of

the important function to which they were afterwards called.

APPENDIX.—"A clamour for the rights of juries was raised, and every effort used to inspire a distrust of the chief justice, who, having delayed a decision on this motion, as the other trials nearly connected with it were coming on, a second presentment against him, tending to impeachment, was laid before the grand jury."

OBS.—We are compelled to notice another misrepresentation. The *chief justice did not delay a decision on this motion on account of the other approaching trials*, but declared that he would have the motion argued again in term. With regard to the second application to the grand jury, it must stand upon the same kind of testimony with the former assertion, and is entitled to the same degree of credit.

APPENDIX.—"The chief justice, on the trial of Mr. Batley, told the special jury, they could not find the defendant guilty, unless they could make up their minds to the proposition, that the whole inhabitants of Manargoody, and the whole witnesses from

the Durbar, were perjured; and unless the whole body of documents which were not impeached in evidence should, by mere presumption, be set aside as forgeries."

Obs.— Here is a material error in the report of the chief justice's summing up. He could not have quoted, "the whole inhabitants of Manargoody, and the whole witnesses from the Durbar," because there were many from both these places on the part of the prosecution. The government mission to Manargoody certainly had succeeded so far as to throw the preponderance of numbers on the side of the defendant, but the verdict of the special jury decided that the superior claim to credit was still on the side of the prosecution. But the best reply to this, is, to refer your Honourable Court to our reply to the first extract from the appendix.

APPENDIX.—"The special jury found, however, Mr. Batley guilty of perjury, and recommended him to mercy, which seems not a very consistent proceeding. It is also said, that the jury were not, in fact, unanimous in their verdict."

QBS.—With submission to the Honourable Authors of the minute, we do not see any inconsistency in this proceeding. We conceive, on the contrary, that a recommendation to mercy can only consist with a verdict of guilty; for without the one, there would be no occasion for the other. We draw a very different conclusion from this fact; which is, that, so far from the jury having been any way biassed against the defendant (as it has been imputed to them), their recommendation of him to mercy proved, that they would have acquitted him, if they could have reconciled it to their consciences. With regard to their opinions of their verdict, it must be presumed, that they were not at first unanimous, because they were two hours in determining upon it; but if they were not unanimous when they delivered their verdict, some of them must have forsworn themselves; a fact which the highly respectable character of the jury will not admit the supposition of; and which, at any rate, the parties would not have been weak enough to confess.

As no notice has been taken of the third trial, likewise before a special jury, in which Mr. Batley and Reddy Row were convicted, each of them for the second time, and in which no recommendation to mercy was made by the jury, we must presume that your Honourable Court have unanimously approved of its proceedings, and of the verdict. It will not here be amiss to communicate to your Honourable Court the subsequent history of the three men who were recommended as fit objects of his Majesty's most gracious pardon, and who, in consequence, obtained it.

Some months previous to the receipt of the pardon, the commissioners detected numerous frauds and forgeries, in which Reddy Row was principally concerned, and similar to those of which he then stood convicted upon two separate indictments. In consequence of which discovery, he (Reddy Row) put an end to his existence by poison.

Maunda Row has since been found guilty of a cheat and conspiracy in a matter unconnected with nabobs' bonds; has twice

stood upon the pillory, and is under sentence of imprisonment for two years.

Mr. Batley has been again indicted, and tried at the last quarter sessions, for a cheat and conspiracy, and has escaped. But in this prosecution we had no concern whatever.

Having, we trust, satisfied your Honourable Court of our innocence of all the charges laid to us, and of the guilt of the real delinquents, which the course of events, subsequent to the trials, has contributed more completely to establish, we earnestly implore your serious consideration of all the circumstances above alluded to. We may now with more confidence affirm, that we have rendered important service to the Honourable East India Company, to the private creditors of the nabob, and to the community at large, by exposing, and effectually defeating, a deep, extensive, and powerfully supported conspiracy to defraud the creditors by means of a regularly organized system of forgery and perjury. It is in vain for the advocates of the commissioners to pre-

tend, that without our interference these forgeries would have been equally discovered. The facts will not bear them out in this pretension. The commissioners were early forewarned, that the bond claimed by Reddy Row was a forgery. The verdict of one jury pronounced it such: the verdict of a second jury confirmed that of the first. A third jury convicted the parties of similar frauds and forgeries. Notwithstanding these repeated proofs of the guilt of the persons in question, the commissioners persisted in their pretended belief of their innocence, and of the genuineness of the two bonds which had been the subject matter of trial: and they continued to repose entire confidence in Reddy Row. Hence may very fairly be presumed what would have been this man's influence, if the trials had had a different issue. Some of the gentlemen, who had been prevailed upon to sign the address to the commissioners, have since had the candour to acknowledge, that the conviction of these persons has preserved the fund from the numerous forgeries in which Reddy Row and his associates were in-

terested. Saving the approbation of our own consciences, and that of the whole settlement (except of those who were interested in the protection of these people), the only reward of all our successful exertions in the cause of public and private justice, has been slander, calumny, and oppression, and all the ruinous consequences resulting from the hostility of government.

We take the liberty, likewise, of calling the Honourable Court's attention to the effect of the late proceedings upon public morals. A dangerous example has been held up to the natives of this country, who were before, notoriously addicted to the practice of forgery and perjury. And, notwithstanding the virtue of the jurors preserved them against all the means employed to influence them, yet the natives have seen the verdicts of the most respectable British juries despised; guilt unpunished, although detected; and innocence persecuted. A striking instance of the alarming increase of vice was exhibited in the delinquent Anunda Row; who, being left at large by the chief justice, until his

Majesty's pleasure should be known upon his case, employed himself, in the mean time, in a fresh cheat and conspiracy, of which he was indicted and arraigned on the same day that his pardon was read in court. The motives of the law officers in all these proceedings have been completely exposed. We dare not dive into those of the other high authorities ; but the facts we have stated cannot now be denied.

We have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) * THOMAS PARRY.
 WILLIAM ABBOTT.
 RD. MAITLAND. *

Madras, January 2d, 1812.

COPIES OF LETTERS,

REFERRED TO IN THE FOREGOING LETTER.

W. PARKER, S. T. GOAD, H. RUSSELL, Esqrs.

Commissioners for investigating the Debts of the Nabobs
of the Carnatic.

GENTLEMEN,

I AM directed by the sitting magistrate to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this date, and to acquaint you in reply, that, as he can only act upon information taken upon oath before himself, he must repeat his request to have the bond in question produced at the public office at 9 o'clock to-morrow morning. I am also directed to remark that it would tend much to expedite and facilitate the enquiry, if you would at the same time send down all the depositions relative to the said bond.

I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient servant,

(Signed)

A. FLOWER,

Clerk to the Justices.

Madras, 26th July, 1808.

Fort St. George, 3d February, 1809.

W. PARKER, S. T. GOAD, and HY. RUSSELL, Esqrs.
Commissioners for investigating the Debts of the late Nabobs of the Carnatic.

GENTLEMEN,

As it appears from the examination of Mr. Tulloh, * in the Supreme Court of Judicature, on Monday the 23d of January, and, from the examination of Mr. Goad, upon the trial of Mr. John Batley, that Roya Reddy Row has committed wilful and corrupt perjury, in swearing that the bond, purporting to be the bond of Omdut Ul Omrah, in favour of Gopaul Row, for 38,500 pagodas, was his property; and, as it is established by the result of two trials, that Ananda Row has committed wilful and corrupt perjury, in swearing that he was in the service of the Durbar at the time that the aforesaid bond bears date; and, as it appears that Sunda Row and Rungah Row have given evidence upon the trials, differing from their informations before you; we request that you will furnish us with certified copies of the informations sworn to before you by the aforesaid Reddy Row, Anunda Row, Sunda Row, and Rungah Row; and that you will allow our solicitor, Mr. William Light, to take notarial copies of the same; as it is our intention to prefer bills of indictment against the person or persons who

* Mr. Tulloh deposed upon oath, that the house of Tulloh, Brodie, and Co. of which he was a partner, had sold to Mr. Anstruther one seventh share of the bond in question. Reddy Row swore, before the commissioners, that the bond was his own property. Mr. Binny afterwards deposed upon oath, that the bond had been, some time before, bought of Reddy Row, for account of his house, Mr. Orme, and some others.

shall appear to have been the suborner or suborners of these perjuries, or who has, or have otherwise conspired to aid and abet the cheat attempted against the public and private creditors of the Nabobs of the Carnatic, by means of the aforesaid forged bond, in favour of Gopaul Row.

We request you will be pleased to favour us with an early answer to this application.

We are,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servants,

(Signed)

T. PARRY.

W. ABBOTT,

R. A. MAITLAND.

TO MESSRS. PARRY, ABBOTT, and MAITLAND.

GENTLEMEN,

WE have received your letter of the 3d inst. Our deference for the verdict pronounced yesterday by a special jury induces us to inform you, that if your solicitor will attend at our office with a copyist, at 11 o'clock to-morrow, or any other day, he shall be at liberty to transcribe the papers mentioned in your letter.

We are,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servants,

(Signed)

W. PARKER.

S. T. GOAD.

HY. RUSSELL.

Office of Commissioners for investigating the Carnatic Debts, Fort St. George, 3d February, 1809.

N.B. This letter was suppressed by the Commissioners, when they sent the following one in to government :—

G. BUCHAN, Esq. Chief Secretary to Government,
Fort St. George.

SIR,

WE are concerned to state to you, for the information of the Honourable the Governor in Council, that, on the 2d instant, a verdict of guilty, accompanied by a recommendation to mercy, was pronounced in the supreme court, against Mr. Batley, on his trial for perjury, on the prosecution, as avowed in court by their own advocate, of Messrs. Roebuck, Parry, Abbott, and Maitland; in which he had, at our suggestion, been defended by the law officers of government.

It having been some time ago announced that a special jury would be summoned upon the occasion of Mr. Batley's trial, we were induced to hope that their verdict would satisfactorily establish the validity or invalidity of the grounds on which the prosecution had been instituted. But with every degree of deference for the verdict of a special jury, we have no hesitation in avowing, that, in the present instance, the evidence adduced on the trial of Mr. Batley has not in any degree had the effect of altering our opinion on the merits of the case; or of impairing the strength of our conviction that both Mr. Batley and Reddy Row are entirely innocent of the charges on which they were indicted.

We might, perhaps, under any circumstances, have deemed it proper to avow this opinion; but, in the present instance, it is peculiarly satisfactory to us to be able to corroborate our own sentiments by those of the chief justice himself. In addressing the jury on the recent trial, the tendency of the charge of the chief justice was strongly in

favour of the acquittal of Mr. Batley; and, in publicly delivering the decision of the court this day, he announced his resolution to decline entering up judgment against the defendants on either of the indictments, and to submit the two verdicts, with his own reports and observations on the respective trials, to the wisdom and consideration of the King.

Since the conclusion of Mr. Batley's trial, a letter has been addressed to us by Messrs. Parry, Abbott, and Maitland, of which we have the honour to inclose a copy, requesting us to furnish them with copies of certain papers, and containing an obscure and indefinite expression of their intention to proceed to the institution of further prosecutions, the objects of which are not mentioned by them, nor can be easily conjectured by us; and, in the course of proceedings in court this day, a menace was distinctly and unreservedly uttered by the advocate for the prosecution on the late trials, that if the commissi-quers in India should under the verdicts which have been recently pronounced, make to the commissioners in England a favourable report of the authenticity of the bond claimed by Reddy Row, he would himself render them the object of a criminal prosecution.

The effects of the trials which have already taken place have been of a tendency to impede, in a most essential degree, the discharge of our public functions; and, from the institution of the further prosecutions which have been threatened, or from the adoption of any other measures calculated to oppose our proceedings, we can contemplate no other result than the complete and effectual obstruction of our official duties.

Under these circumstances, we feel ourselves reduced to the indispensable necessity of distinctly and unreservedly

stating to the Honourable the Governor in Council, that unless measures are adopted by government to relieve us from the embarrassment to which we have been reduced by the persons who have avowed themselves the prosecutors on the late trials, it will be utterly impracticable for us to proceed with any immediate effect, or with any prospect of ultimate success in the discharge of the duties which have been confided to us. We are prepared to make every exertion in our power, and to do every thing we can towards the promotion of the public interests; but we feel that our exertions alone can be of no avail, and that, without the aid of government in this emergency, all our endeavours to discharge the functions of our office must be rendered nugatory and abortive.

We have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

W. PARKER.

S. T. GOAD.

HY. RUSSELL.

Office of Commissioners,
6th Feb. 1809.

*Extract, Fort St. George, Public Consultations, 8th
February, 1809.*

The Governor in Council having maturely considered the facts represented in the preceding letters; (*viz.* letter from the commissioners to the chief secretary, of the 6th of February, with its inclosure, the letter from Messrs. Parry, Abbott, and Matland, of the 5d) it appears an object of urgent consideration, that early means should be taken to remove the difficulties which at present embarrass the enquiry of the commissioners appointed for the investigation of the Carnatic claims. The Governor in

Council is compelled at the same time to state that the grounds of the representation are, to all appearance, closely connected with a very factious spirit, which has been lately, from causes not difficult to be traced, evinced in this settlement.

With regard to the representation of the commissioners, the Governor in Council considers the course to be observed by this government to be clear, as it is evident that the enquiry with which they are entrusted cannot be brought to a satisfactory conclusion, if it does not obtain the decided support of public authority; and the orders of the Honourable Court of Directors cannot leave any doubt of their intention on this point.

The gentlemen particularly brought to the notice of the government by the commissioners are Mr. Roebuck, Mr. Parry, Mr. Abbott, and Mr. Maitland. In respect to Mr. Roebuck, the Governor in Council observes, with concern, that a public officer, holding the situations he fills under this government, should be active in the intrigues of faction. When the question of the Carnatic claims was under consideration, at the remote period of the year 1788, it stands recorded that Mr. Roebuck was "particularly active and violent;" and, at that time, the conduct of this gentleman was marked with high public displeasure. It might have been expected that Mr. Roebuck would have been more circumspect in his subsequent conduct, but the nature of that gentleman's concern in those discussions, which have embarrassed the course of the enquiry of the commissioners; his eagerness on all occasions to promote every factious proceeding, are too notorious to be any longer overlooked; and it is essential that Mr. Roebuck should not be permitted to continue longer in this settlement. Resolved, accordingly, that Mr. Roebuck be di-

rected to proceed with the least possible delay, to Vizagapatam, and to take charge of that factory.

Mr. Thomas Parry having been, on a former occasion, required, by the orders of the Court of Directors, to proceed to Europe; and his residence in India having only been permitted so long as his conduct should be free from objection; it appears incumbent on the board, from the nature of Mr. Parry's late proceedings, to direct that the order of the Honourable Court of Directors be now enforced. Resolved, accordingly, that Mr. Parry be required to proceed to England by the first opportunity.

The conduct of Mr. Maitland having been entirely incompatible with his duty, as a magistrate of this place, it is resolved, that he be removed from that station.

FURTHER PAPERS
RESPECTING
THE NEGOCIATION
FOR
A RENEWAL
OF THE
EAST-INDIA COMPANY'S
Exclusive Privileges.

LONDON :
PRINTED, BY ORDER OF THE COURT OF DIRECTORS,
FOR THE
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1813.

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FURTHER LIST OF PAPERS.

- No. LIX.—Minutes of a General Court of Proprietors, held on Tuesday, the 5th May, 1812.
- No. LX.—Minutes of a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 27th November 1812.
- No. LXI.—Letter from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire, dated the 28th November 1812.
- No. LXII. Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman, dated the 28th November 1812.
- No. LXIII.—Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 2d December 1812.
- No. LXIV.—Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Tuesday, the 15th December 1812.
- No. LXV.—Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 16th December 1812.
- No. LXVI.—Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Friday, the 18th December 1812.
- No. LXVII.—Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Tuesday, the 22d December 1812.
- No. LXVIII.—Minutes of a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 28th December 1812.
- No. LXIX.—Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Monday, the 28th December 1812.
- No. LXX.—Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th December 1812, noticed in the preceding Minutes.
- No. LXXI.—Minute of a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 30th December 1812.
- No. LXXII.—Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 30th December 1812.

FURTHER LIST OF PAPERS.

No. LXXIII.—Letter from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire, dated the 30th December 1812, noticed in the preceding Minutes.

No. LXXIV.—Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Tuesday, the 5th January 1813.

No. LXXV.—Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 4th January 1813, noticed in the preceding Minute.

No. LXXVI.—Minutes of a General Court of Proprietors, held on Tuesday, the 5th January 1813.

No. LXXVII.—Resolution of a General Court of Proprietors held the 5th May 1812, noticed in the preceding Minutes.

No. LIX.

*At a General Court of the United Company of Merchants
of England Trading to the East-Indies, held on*

Tuesday, the 5th May 1812.

Minutes of the last Court of the 1st instant were read.

The Chairman acquainted the Court, that it is met by adjournment, for the purpose of taking into further consideration the papers which were laid by the Court of Directors before the General Court on the 1st instant.

And the Court having considered the same accordingly,

It was on a motion,

Resolved Unanimously, That this Court has learnt with deep concern and surprize, that His Majesty's Ministers have been induced to change the view they first entertained of the propriety of confining to the Port of London the returns of the trade to India, now to be permitted to all British subjects. That the measure of opening the Outports to vessels of all descriptions from India, comprehending in that term the Eastern Islands, appear to this Court to be fraught with consequences ruinous to the Company, and all the long train of interests connected with it; by removing from the port of London the greater part of the Indian trade, which it has hitherto enjoyed; by rendering useless many of the expensive establishments formed there for the merchandize and shipping of that trade, and throwing out of bread many thousands of persons who now derive constant employment from it; by deranging the practice and frustrating the end of stated public sales, which are useful and important, both to the Country and the Company, who are necessarily restricted to this practice; but, above all, by affording facilities for the smuggling of teas into the port and harbours of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to an extent unlimited, and, as this Court apprehend, uncontrollable. That the consequences of this must be, the destruction of the Company's China trade, their best source of commercial profit;
the

the failure of their dividend; the depreciation of their stock; and unless a fund is provided from some other source for the payment of the dividend, inability on their part to continue to perform the functions assigned to them in the Government of British India. That if the constitution by which the Indian Empire is now administered should thus be subverted, the excellent system of civil and military service formed under the Company, and maintainable only by such a body, will be broken down; the tranquillity and happiness of the vast population which that empire contains, the interests of this country in Asia, and its constitution at home, will be imminently endangered.

That the professed object for which the proposed changes are to be made, and such immense sacrifices hazarded, namely, the increase of the commerce of this kingdom, cannot be in any great degree attained, there being no practicability of extending materially the use of our manufactures among the Indian people, the tonnage allotted by the Company, or afforded by Indian ships in the management of individuals, for such exports, not having been fully occupied. Neither does it appear practicable largely to augment the importation of profitable commodities from thence; of all which the example of the American trade to the East is a proof, British Manufactures, which they could easily have procured, making no part of it, nor their returns exhibiting any new articles of importance. That therefore the trade now enjoyed by the Company and individuals will be the only certain trade to which new adventurers can have recourse. And this will be no addition to the commerce of the Country, but only a transfer from one set of hands to another: so that, old establishments will be subverted, without substituting any thing equally good in their place; and, to all appearance, with great detriment to the nation, particularly in the defalcation of a large part of the duties now collected on tea, to the amount of four millions sterling per annum; for all which defalcation, whether, one, or two, or three millions, new taxes must be laid on the people.

That the cause of the Company has been deeply injured by prejudice, ignorance, erroneous assumptions,

tions, and of late by extensive combinations, and by unfair representation, canvas, and intimidation: in all which the merits and rights of the Company, the political interests of British India, and of this country as connected with them, have been left out of sight, and the single object of the extension of commerce, an object too only of speculation, in opposition to past experience, is the governing principal.

This Court however confidently hope, that Parliament will not decide the fate of the Company, on the representations and demands of private interests, but on just and comprehensive views of national policy; and the Court must also believe that His Majesty's Ministers are too enlightened and equitable, finally to adopt any measure calculated to destroy the commercial profits of the Company, and thereby to disable them from performing their political functions. This Court therefore entirely approving, both of the firmness which their Directors have shewn in maintaining the interests of the Company, and of the manner in which they have, in the papers now produced by them, defended those interests, doth recommend it to them to persevere in the negotiation with His Majesty's Ministers upon the same principles: assured of the determination of this Court to support them to the utmost, in maintaining the permanence of the Company and the national interests which are involved in their stability.

Resolved Unanimously, That the thanks of this Court be given to Randle Jackson, Esq. for his very luminous and excellent speech this day; for the great zeal, ability and industry he has on various occasions, and particularly on this, displayed for the honour and advantage of this Company.

Resolved Unanimously, That the warmest thanks of this General Court be offered to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and Court of Directors of this Company, for their very able conduct in the negotiation with Government for the renewal of the Charter; alike evincing the most luminous ideas of the best interests of this Company, and their most honorable conduct in the management of so important a concern.

The Court then on the question adjourned.

No. LX.

*At a Secret Committee of Correspondence,
The 27th November 1812.*

The Chairman reported to the Committee, that he and the Deputy Chairman had this morning a conference with the President of the Board of Commissioners, on the subject of the Renewal of the Company's Charter, at which his Lordship declared it to be the intention of His Majesty's Ministers, not to abandon the proposition they had made, for allowing a direct trade between India and the outports of the United Kingdom; but that the proposition might be modified, by confining the ports to which ships shall be allowed to import goods from India, to a number less than that to which the Warehousing Act now extends. Lord Buckinghamshire, however, was desirous, before resuming the correspondence relating to it, that the Committee of Correspondence should hold a conference with Lord Liverpool and himself upon the subject.

The Chairman further stated, that, in reply to Lord Buckinghamshire, the Deputy Chairman and himself declined making any observation at present, but stated their intention to communicate the substance of his Lordship's remarks to the Committee of Correspondence, and also expressed their wish, that the Committee might have the honour of waiting upon his Lordship, previously to the proposed conference with Lord Liverpool, to which Lord Buckinghamshire consented.

The Committee, in consequence, resolved to assemble at eleven o'clock on Tuesday next, for the purpose of deliberating upon the subject of the above communication, previously to waiting upon Lord Buckinghamshire, at the hour of two on that day.

No. LXI.

Letter from the CHAIRMAN and DEPUTY CHAIRMAN to the Right Honorable the EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

East-

East-India House, 28th November, 1812.

MY LORD,

We have the honor to acquaint your Lordship, that we have communicated to a Secret Committee of Correspondence the substance of the conversation which we had yesterday by the honour of holding with your Lordship, Mr. Wallace, and Mr. Sullivan, and in which it was notified to us, that the opinion of His Majesty's Government remains unaltered, regarding the expediency of not confining the import trade from the East-Indies to the port of London.

The Committee received this communication with the deepest concern and regret, its Members unanimously concurring with us in opinion, that should the proposed extension of the trade, even to a small number of the outports of the kingdom, be sanctioned by the Legislature, the measure will be highly prejudicial to the public revenue, injurious to the East-India Company, and detrimental to the prosperity of the merchants, manufacturers, traders, and other numerous bodies interested in the commerce with India, as now carried on through the channel of the river Thames. The Committee being still desirous of an opportunity of renewing their representations to your Lordship upon this important question, before any communication is made to the Court on the subject, have directed us to request the honor of a conference with your Lordship for that purpose. Should it be perfectly convenient to your Lordship to receive the Deputation, on Tuesday next, at two o'clock, we shall be able to lay the result of the conference before the Court on the following day.

We have the honour to be, my Lord,

Your Lordships most obedient humble servants,

(Signed)

HUGH INGLIS,

ROBERT THORNTON.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Buckinghamshire,
&c. &c. &c.

No. LXII.

LETTER from the Right Honorable the EARL OF
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE to the CHAIRMAN.

SIR, *India Board, 23th November, 1812.*

I had the honor of receiving your letter of this day, proposing that the Secret Committee of Correspondence should wait upon me at this Board on Tuesday next.

I shall be happy to have the honor of seeing them; but as I am desirous that Lord Liverpool, and other Members of the Board, should be present at the interview, and as I find that twelve o'clock will be more convenient to them than two, you will, I hope, have no objection to make the appointment for the former hour.

I have the honor to be

Your most obedient and faithful humble servant,

(Signed) BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

Sir Hugh Inglis, Bart.
&c. &c. &c.

No. LXIII.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Wednesday, the 2d December 1812.

The Chairman acquainted the Court, that a meeting took place yesterday, at the Board, between several of His Majesty's Ministers and the Committee of Correspondence, upon the subject of the renewal of the Company's exclusive privileges, when it was agreed, that no minutes should be then taken, in order to afford the most unreserved mode of carrying on the discussion; at the conclusion of which it was understood, that His Majesty's Ministers would communicate, in writing, their sentiments upon the whole of the subject.

No. LXIV.

* No. LXIV.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Tuesday, the 15th December 1812.

Minutes of the 2d instant were read and approved.

The Chairman stated, that two conferences between His Majesty's Ministers and the Committee of Correspondence had taken place since the 2d instant, *viz.* on the 5th and 12th instant, but that he had nothing further to communicate to the Court in consequence.

No. LXV.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Wednesday, the 16th December 1812.

The Court advertg to the statement which the Chairman had, with their approbation, made to the General Court to-day, as to the late conferences with His Majesty's Ministers, upon the subject of renewing the Company's exclusive privileges, and this Court deeming it a proper mark of respect to His Majesty's Ministers, that they should be apprized of the same as early as possible,

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman were requested to wait on the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India to-morrow, to communicate to his Lordship what had passed in the General Court this day, and to state to his Lordship, that the Court of Directors continue decidedly to entertain the opinion which they have formerly expressed to His Majesty's Ministers, as to the ruinous consequences of admitting the imports from India to the outports of this kingdom.

No. LXVI.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Friday, the 18th December 1812.

The Court having resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole Court,

And being resumed, the following report from the Committee of the Whole Court was read :

“ The Committee taking into consideration the present state of the negociation with H’s Majesty’s Ministers for the renewal of the Company’s exclusive privileges, deem it to be highly important, that the sentiments of the Court of Directors, upon the proposition brought forward for admitting the imports from India to the outports of this kingdom, should be unequivocally known.”

“ The Committee therefore recommend to the Court to pass a resolution, stating that the proposition in question is, for various reasons already set forth in the Court’s writings, pregnant with ruin to the affairs of the Company, inasimuch as it would render them incapable of performing the functions allotted to them, as well in their commercial as in their political capacity, and that the Court cannot therefore, consistently with their duty to their Constituents, recommend to them the adoption of such a proposition.”

And it was, on the question,

Resolved Unanimously, That this Court approve the said report.

And the Chairman and Deputy Chairman were requested to wait on the Right Honorable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, and to communicate to His Lordship the above proceedings of this day.

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No. LXVII.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Tuesday, the 22d December 1812.

The Chairman acquainted the Court, that in obedience to their resolution of the 18th instant, the Deputy and himself, on Saturday last, waited on the Right Honorable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, with a copy of the minutes of the Secret Court of the 18th instant.

No. LXVIII.

No. LXVIII.

At a Secret Committee of Correspondence,

The 28th December 1812.

Read a letter from the Right Honorable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th instant ; and

Paragraphs proposed to form part of the draft of a letter to his Lordship, in reply.

No. LXIX.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Monday, the 28th December 1812.

Minutes of the 15th, 16th, 18th, and 22d instant, were read and approved.

Read a letter from the Right Honorable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th instant ; also,

Paragraphs proposed to form part of the draft of a letter to his Lordship, in reply.

No. LXX.

LETTER *from the Right Honorable the EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE to the CHAIRMAN and DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, referred to in the preceding Minutes.*

GENTLEMEN, *India-Board, 24th Dec. 1812.*

The conferences held at this Board with the Committee of Correspondence, having had for their object the most unreserved and candid discussions upon points of the greatest importance, with respect to the renewal of the East-India Company's Charter,
and

and it having been understood that no further steps should be taken upon the subject, until a communication was made by me, in an official shape, to the Court of Directors, it was not without some surprize that the copy of their resolution of the 18th instant was received by His Majesty's Government, because that resolution, adopted under such circumstances, appear to them to have for its object an abrupt termination to all discussion.

They cannot, however, consider it the less incumbent upon them, through you, as the proper official channel, to bring before the Court of Directors the principles upon which the opinions I have to apprise you of have been formed, in order to present to the Proprietors and the Public a correct view of a subject to which so much importance is attached.

I shall, therefore, convey to you the sentiments of His Majesty's Government, precisely in the terms I should have done, if no intimation had been made of the resolution of the Court of Directors of the 18th instant; and with that object I proceed to inform you, that with regard to those points, to which the attention of the Committee of Correspondence has been chiefly directed at the conferences held at this Board, the principle uniformly maintained, as the basis of any arrangement for the renewal of the East-India Company's Charter, *viz.* that the merchants of this country have as substantial claim to as much liberty of trade as they can enjoy, without injury to other important national interests, cannot be departed from.

It was in the hope that the opening of the export trade with India to the merchants of the city of London and of the outports, whilst the import was confined to the port of London, might not be found inconsistent with this principle, that a disposition was felt by the Government to propose an arrangement to that effect.

In consequence, however, of the promulgation of such an intention, several persons, interested in the commerce of the outports, represented in the strongest terms, that the proposed limitation of the import trade from India, rendered the extension of no value to them :

them ; and they declared themselves prepared to maintain, that this limitation was not called for by any adequate motive of public interest.

They urged their claim to an equal participation in the general trade to India, and their conviction, that the ground upon which the exclusion in favour of the port of London was defended, *viz.* the additional danger of smuggling, could not be supported, and they were satisfied that the alleged danger might be obviated by revenue regulations. They also entered largely into the subject of the China trade, contending strenuously against the renewal of the Company's exclusive Charter ; and stated their reasons for believing, that measures might be adopted by which that trade could be opened, without injury to the revenue, and without hazarding the continuance of the intercourse with the Emperor of China's dominions.

The importance attached to these representations, induced His Majesty's Government to revise the arrangement which had been in contemplation ; and although they did not see cause, under all the circumstances bearing upon this question, to alter the opinion they had entertained, of the propriety of continuing the existing restrictions upon the commercial intercourse with China, and of preserving to the Company the monopoly of the tea trade, they nevertheless felt, that the merchants belonging to the outports had established a claim against an absolute restriction of the import trade to the port of London.

Under this impression, I addressed my letter to you on the 27th of April ultimo.

The observations made by the Committee of Correspondence, in their reply of the 29th of the same month, did not fail to engage the serious attention of His Majesty's Government, but after the best examination of those observations, aided by all the information they have obtained from the Boards of Customs and Excise, they are not enabled to concur in the opinion, that the proposed extension of the import trade from India would be productive of any great increase of smuggling, and certainly not to the extent stated by the Court of Directors.

It

It is conceived, that the apprehensions entertained on this account might be obviated by various regulations, such as confining the trade to those ports which are, or may be so circumstanced, as to afford security to the due collection of the revenue ; by the limitation of it to vessels of four hundred tons burthen ; by attaching the forfeiture of the ship and cargo to the discovery of any illicit articles on board ; by an extension of the manifest act ; by regulations for checking the practice of smuggling in the ships of the Company ; as well as by other provisions, too minute to be entered into at present, but which will, of course, be attended to, in discussing the details of the subject.

I am persuaded it will not escape your observation, that from obvious considerations, the English Channel must, at all times, especially in time of peace, afford facilities and inducements for smuggling, which do not occur elsewhere to the same extent, on account of the clandestine traffic already established, and the ready communication with the opposite shore.

But, with respect to the whole of this part of the question, it is impossible to lose sight of the deep interest which the Government must feel in the prevention of smuggling. The interests of the Company are, no doubt, involved in it ; but those of the Government are still more concerned : and it cannot be supposed that they would bring forward any proposition which appeared to them likely to endanger a revenue of from three to four millions ; or that, if a defalcation should unexpectedly arise, they would not immediately take measures for applying a remedy. The Company have, therefore, an ample ground of confidence, not only in the disposition of Government, but in their effectual co-operation on those points, on which the Court of Directors appear to feel the greatest anxiety, and* on which they urged their strongest objections to the proposed arrangement.

The several articles which may be imported from the countries within the limits of the Company's Charter, and which are charged with an *ad valorem* duty, although, with the exception of Tea, they bear a very small proportion to the whole of the revenue collected from

from the trade from India and China, are nevertheless of sufficient importance to demand the attention of Government, as the question may affect the interests of the East-India Company, as well as those of the public revenue.

With this view, it will be necessary to consider whether, with respect to some of them, a rated duty might not be substituted, and whether regulations may not be made for the security of the duty *ad valorem* on those articles which shall continue to be so charged, and which, at the same time, shall prevent their being purchased at a price, likely to operate injuriously to the manufacturers of this country.

The justice of the observations, respecting the additional number of Europeans that would find their way to India in consequence of the extension of the trade, must be admitted to a certain extent; but it is obvious, that this danger would arise from the extension of the export trade to India, and would scarcely be lessened by confining the import trade to the Port of London. Every individual, during his residence in India, would of course be subject to the existing regulations of the local Governments.

The situation of Lascars, who are occasionally employed in the navigation of ships from India to this country, would demand the humane interposition of the Legislature; and there can be no doubt that effectual provision for their maintenance while in England, and for their return to India, will be made.

Having gone through the principal points to which our recent conferences have related, it may be proper for me to apprise you, that His Majesty's Government are of opinion, that the establishment of King's troops, which may be requisite for the preservation of the peace and security of the British possessions in India, must depend upon circumstances that it would be difficult to anticipate; but as the financial situation of the Company may render it necessary that the numbers to be maintained at their charge should be limited, there can be no objection to propose to Parliament, to specify that number by legislative enactment.

I have thus endeavoured to bring the sentiments of
His

His Majesty's Government before you, with the same candor that has been evinced in our recent discussions; and I can venture confidently to assure you, that my colleagues, as well as myself, are most anxious to promote such an adjustment between the Public and the Court of Proprietors, as may be satisfactory to all parties.

The expediency of adhering to that system, by which the Government of India has been administered through the intervention of the Company, is strongly felt by His Majesty's Government; but it must not be supposed, that there are no limits to that expediency, or that there are no advantages which might result from a different course.

It is for the Court of Proprietors to decide, whether their own interests, as well as those of the numerous persons, depending upon them, both at home and abroad, can best be preserved by their rejection of, or acquiescence in, those conditions, upon which alone, consistent with their public duty, His Majesty's Government can submit a proposition to Parliament for the renewal of the Charter.

You, Gentlemen, must be aware, that from its approaching expiration, provision must be made, without delay, for the future government of India; and that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, in his speech at the opening of the present session, has called upon Parliament to make such provision.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient and faithful humble servant,

(Signed) BUCKINGHAMSHIRE,

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman
of the Court of Directors.

No. LXXI.

At a Secret Committee of Correspondence,

The 30th December 1812.

Draft of a letter to the President of the Board of Commissioners, in reply to his Lordship's letter of the 25th instant, was read and unanimously approved.

No. LXXII.

No. LXXII.

At a Secret Court of Directors, held on

Wednesday, the 30th December 1812.

Draft of a letter to the President of the Board of Commissioners, in reply to his Lordship's letter of the 24th instant, was read and unanimously approved.

No. LXXIII.

LETTER *from the* CHAIRMAN *and* DEPUTY CHAIRMAN *to the Right Honourable the* EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, *noticed in the preceding Minutes.*

East-India House, 30th December 1812.

MY LORD, *

WE were honoured, on the 25th instant, with the letter which your Lordship was pleased to address to us on the preceding day, and have laid it before the Court of Directors. We are instructed by the Court to acquaint your Lordship that a General Court of Proprietors of East-India Stock has been summoned, for the special purpose of taking into consideration the important subjects treated of in your Lordship's letter, and we shall lose no time in submitting to your Lordship the result of the deliberations at that meeting.

In reference to the first paragraph of your Lordship's letter, in which the resolution passed by the Court, on the 18th instant, is stated to have caused some surprise to His Majesty's Government, as appearing to have for its object an abrupt termination to all discussion, we are desired by the Court of Directors respectfully to offer the following explanation.

Your Lordship is aware, that at the commencement of the recent conferences on the subject of the Renewal of the Company's Charter, it was agreed between your Lordship and the Deputation from the Court, that no minutes should be taken of what passed in conversation.

Accordingly, no particular communication was made, prior to the receipt of your Lordship's letter of the 24th instant, of the result of these conferences: but an earnest desire having been expressed by those Gentlemen in the Direction who are not Members of the Committee of Correspondence, to be informed, whether the differences of opinion, formerly known to exist, on some important points, between His Majesty's Government and the Court, were in a train of reconciliation, and the general answer which we thought ourselves bound in duty to give, not having tended to afford them the satisfaction they expected, they deemed it proper that the sense of the Court, respecting the question of the outports, should be formally notified to your Lordship, and in consequence the unanimous resolution of the 18th was transmitted. Had the Court perceived that that proceeding admitted of the interpretation which has been put upon it by His Majesty's Government, they would assuredly have taken pains more effectually to guard against so great a misconception of the real intention, which was no other than to mark their adherence to the opinions they have uniformly entertained on the disputed question, of extending the import trade from India to the outports of this kingdom, which had formed the principal subject of discussion between the Members of His Majesty's Government and the Committee of Correspondence. It was certainly desirable for the Members of that deputed Committee, and it was thought that it might not be unacceptable to your Lordship, to know that the sentiments which they had expressed in the course of discussion, were sanctioned by the unanimous concurrence of the Body by whom they were delegated. The mode in which the resolution was adopted was conformable to the usage of the Court of Directors on solemn occasions, namely, after a report from a Committee of the whole Court, which always requires signatures, and which, in the present instance, was subscribed by every Director.

We trust, my Lord, that this explanation of the measure alluded to, will prove satisfactory to your Lordship and the other members of His Majesty's Government; and while we return our sincere acknowledgements

ledgements for the attention with which our representations have been listened to, in the various interviews with which we have been honored by your Lordship and His Majesty's Ministers who attended, we hope, at the same time, to stand perfectly acquitted of any design, either to prevent or embarrass a full and deliberate discussion of the great interests at stake.

It is a matter of deep concern to us to find, that His Majesty's Ministers seem still to adhere to the principle of opening the outports of the United Kingdom to the importation of commodities from India. We have already, in our letters of the 15th and 29th April last, fully stated the dangers that must result to the Company, from so great an enlargement of the privilege in Eastern commerce to British merchants. We presumed to think our objections to that enlargement have not been adequately answered; and we have to express the concern felt by the Court, that no communication has yet been made to them, of those representations which first led His Majesty's Ministers to entertain, and which induce them still to adhere to the opinion, that the public interest will be best consulted, by not confining the import trade from the East-Indies to the port of London. It would occasion much satisfaction to the Court, should such a communication have the effect of obviating their objections, even in part, to a measure, which the most imperative considerations alone could have influenced them to oppose: and were it unfortunately to fail in producing this effect, it is nevertheless desirable, that the Court of Directors shall have an opportunity of reviewing the question with all the intelligence that can be brought to bear upon it. Your Lordship has, indeed, been pleased to favor us with a brief summary of some of the arguments used by the merchants on this subject,—arguments, we must own, not in the least convincing to us: and we assure ourselves, that in advert- ing to them, your Lordship does not mean that the Company should be concluded, or their fate determined, by what those who oppose their interests choose to advance; although their representations appear to have so far influenced His Majesty's Ministers, as to lead

lead them to think, that the merchants, "have a claim
 "to as much liberty of trade as they can enjoy, with-
 "out injury to other important national interests." In
 those interests, we may presume, are comprehended
 both the consideration of the public revenue, and the
 maintenance of the East-India Company. But what
 that extent of trade is, "which can be granted with
 safety to those interests," is still a question undeter-
 mined. We confess that the regulations contemplated
 by His Majesty's Ministers, so far as your Lordship
 has been pleased to explain them to us, appear by no
 means calculated to remove our fears. The compa-
 rative interest which the Public and the Company have
 in preventing the smuggling of Tea, was described in
 our letter of the 29th April; and though it be true, as
 your Lordship observes, that the stake of the Public
 in this concern is numerically greater than that of the
 Company, yet the importance of the Company's infe-
 rior stake is, to them, infinitely greater, than would
 be to the Public the importance of the loss the revenue
 might sustain; because, as matters now stand, the
 Company have no certain dependance but the China
 trade, for resources essential to their subsistence. We
 do not the least question, that His Majesty's Ministers
 would be thoroughly disposed to frame additional regu-
 lations to prevent smuggling Tea, should those now in
 contemplation be tried, and be found insufficient. But
 besides that we extremely distrust the practicability of
 preventing smuggling to a large extent, where the
 temptations would be so great, we must entreat your
 Lordship and His Majesty's Ministers seriously to consi-
 der, what would be the situation of the Company, if they
 obtained a charter upon no better terms than those now
 proposed, and upon trial it should be found that their
 commercial income failed, and that their dividend should
 be unprovided for or lowered:—their stock would im-
 mediately fall; their credit would be diminished; the
 currency of their affairs, in their payments particu-
 larly, would be impeded; general alarm and dissatis-
 faction in all parties connected with this great establish-
 ment would be felt: and there would be a necessity
 for going to Parliament again, when evils great, per-
 haps

haps irretrievable, would have been experienced. It is the duty of the Executive Body of the Company to carry their views forward to such contingencies, and to seek provision against them: and we must beg leave to add, that whatever rights the merchants may claim, or the nation be pleased to bestow on them, it cannot be equitable to make concessions to them which should destroy the Company, who acquired the Indian empire, and who are as much the owners of the chief seats of European trade in that empire, as they are of their freeholds in London.

With respect to the resort of Europeans to India, if we do not misunderstand the scope of your Lordship's observation, it seems to imply, that their numbers might be in proportion to the export trade from this country. If, indeed, they were to be regulated by this scale, our apprehensions would be the less; but we have no difficulty in acknowledging, that in addition to all our other arguments against admitting importations to the outports, we think that the granting of this privilege would increase the spirit of rash speculation from Great Britain and Ireland, and thereby the number of adventurers in search of fortune in India; for it is to be remembered, that those adventurers would naturally seek for new establishments, even out of the Company's territories, and there endeavour to acquire real property.

But, my Lord, this is only one of many points which require particular regulations; and, at the stage at which we are now arrived in the negotiation, we cannot but state to your Lordship, the anxious wish of the Court to be made acquainted with the whole plan which His Majesty's Government may have it in contemplation to recommend to Parliament for a Renewal of the East-India Company's Charter: including such amendments in the system of the Company's territorial government and administration, as past experience may have indicated; the regulations deemed necessary for promoting the discipline and efficiency of the Indian Army; the amount of force which His Majesty may be empowered to maintain in India at the expense of the Company; and the provisions that may be
thought

thought requisite for settling the relative powers of the Board of Commissioners and the Court of Directors. Though these topics were specifically mentioned in the letters from Lord Melville to the Chairs, of the 30th September 1808 and the 21st March 1812, the Court are still, in great measure, uninformed of the arrangements, in regard to them, which His Majesty's Government may have in view to propose. And we entreat, also, that your Lordship will enable us to lay before the Court of Directors, and ultimately the Proprietors, in any shape that you may judge fit, the information, additional to that of the merchants already solicited, on which the determination of His Majesty's Ministers rests, as to the extension of the trade to the outports, and their intentions upon the other parts of the arrangement to which we have now adverted.

The requests we now make appear to us the more reasonable, from the weighty intimation conveyed in the concluding part of your Lordship's letter. It brings into view (to repeat an expression used in our letter of the 15th April), "*questions of the last importance to the safety of the British Empire in India, and of the British Constitution at Home.*" This is a solemn subject for the Country, as well as the Company. If, indeed, it should ever come under actual discussion, we have that confidence in the equity and wisdom of the Nation, that notwithstanding all present clamours, they will wish to do the Company justice, and to guard all the other great interests which must come into question. But prepared as we shall be, if forced into this situation, to maintain the rights and claims of our Constituents, we must yet express our hope, that the Company will not be reduced to the hard alternative, of thus having to contend for all that is dear to them, or to accept a Charter on terms which will not enable them to execute the part hitherto assigned to them in the Indian system.

We have the honour to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient humble Servants,

(Signed)

HUGH INGLIS,

ROBERT THORNTON.

The Right Honorable the Earl of
Buckinghamshire, &c. &c. &c.

No. LXXIV.

*At a Secret Court of Directors, held on
Tuesday, the 5th January 1813.*

The Chairman laid before the Court a letter from the Right Honorable the President of the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, dated the 4th instant, which was read.

No. LXXV.

LETTER from the Right Honorable the EARL OF BUCKINGHAMSHIRE to the CHAIRMAN and DEPUTY CABIRMAN, noticed in the preceding Minute.

India Board, 4th January, 1813.

GENTLEMEN,

I had the honor to receive your Letter of the 30th ultimo, and proceed to convey to you the sentiments of His Majesty's Government, as far as it would seem advisable, under present circumstances, to continue the discussion.

With respect to your observation, that the representations which induced His Majesty's Government to form their opinions upon the subject of the extension of the Import Trade, have been withheld from the Court of Directors, and that your objections to that extension have not been "adequately answered," you must allow me to avail myself of this occasion to apprise you, that although His Majesty's Government have shewn a strong disposition to enter into the most frank and unreserved explanations with the Court of Directors, they have not felt that it was within the range of their duty to engage in a controversy upon the points at issue. That duty has been sufficiently discharged, in stating, for the information of the Court of Proprietors, the conditions upon which they were prepared to submit a proposition to Parliament, for the renewal of the Charter, accompanied by such reasons as are conveyed in the communications they have authorized me to make,

I can, however, have no difficulty in acquainting you, that the claims of the Merchants connected with the outports have not been brought before Government by written documents; that they have been urged and discussed at personal conferences with individuals, interested in their success; and that you have already been informed of the grounds upon which they were supported; but that it does not appear to His Majesty's Government, that you can be warranted in expecting that they should give a more particular account of the arguments adduced at those conferences.

I may add, however, that as the merchants and manufacturers connected with the outports, considering themselves entitled, at the expiration of the Charter of the East-India Company, to carry on that trade, from which they had been excluded for a limited time, had entered into a statement of their case, by petitions presented to Parliament in the course of the last session, you may obtain from those records that further information which you appear desirous to possess.

With regard to those points to which you have alluded, as requiring particular regulation, the Ministers of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent having signified to you, that consistently with their sense of public duty, they can submit no arrangement to Parliament, that does not include an extension of the import trade, and the Court of Directors having, with a knowledge of their opinions upon that point, by their resolution of the 18th ultimo, declined to recommend to the Court of Proprietors to agree to such an extension, it would seem premature to enter into details, until that question shall have been finally determined.

You are apprised of the disposition of His Majesty's Government to adhere to the present system of administration in India, and I am not aware that, if circumstances should admit of its continuance, it would be necessary to propose any material alteration in the existing provisions for carrying it into execution, except such as may arise from the opening of the trade.

The confidence you express in the wisdom and justice

tice of Parliament will, I am persuaded, not be disappointed; nor is it to be supposed, that in the consideration of this great question (to use your own words) "the safety of the British Empire in India" and the British Constitution at Home" will be overlooked, either by the Legislature or the Ministers of the Crown.

If the Government of India cannot be carried on with safety to the Constitution, except through the intervention of the Company, the propositions of the Court of Directors, whatever they may be, must unconditionally be admitted.

It will be for Parliament to determine, whether the Nation is, in this respect, without an alternative; or whether, if a change of system should be rendered necessary by the decision of the East-India Company, measures might not be taken for opening the trade, and at the same time providing such an administration of the Government of India, as might be found compatible with the interests and security of the British Constitution.

I have the honor to be,

Gentlemen,

Your obedient and faithful humble Servant,

(Signed) BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

The Chairman and Deputy Chairman
of the East-India Company.

No. LXXVI.

*At a General Court of the United Company of Merchants
of England Trading to the East-Indies, held on*

Tuesday, the 5th January 1813.

The Chairman acquainted the Court, that it is specially summoned for the purpose of there being laid before them further papers respecting the negotiation for a renewal of the Company's exclusive privileges.

The said papers were then read, being as follow, viz.

Minutes of a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 27th November, 1812. (No. LX.)

Letter from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire, dated the 28th November 1812. (No. LXI.)

Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman, dated the 28th November 1812. (No. LXII.)

Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 2d December 1812. (No. LXIII.)

Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Tuesday, the 15th December 1812. (No. LXIV.)

Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 16th December 1812. (No. LXV.)

Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Friday, the 18th December 1812. (No. LXVI.)

Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Tuesday, the 22d December 1812. (No. LXVII.)

Minutes of a Secret Committee of Correspondence, the 28th December 1812. (No. LXVIII.)

Minutes of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Monday, the 28th December 1812. (No. LXIX.)

Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 24th December 1812, noticed in the preceding Minutes. (No. LXX.)

Minute of a Secret Correspondence, the 30th December 1812. (No. LXXI.)

Minute of a Secret Court of Directors, held on Wednesday, the 30th December 1812. (No. LXXII.)

Letter from the Chairman and Deputy Chairman to the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire, dated the 30th December 1812, noticed in the preceding Minutes. (No. LXXIII.)

Letter from the Right Honorable the Earl of Buckinghamshire to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman, dated the 4th January 1813. (No. LXXV.)

The Chairman acquainted the Court, that the above papers are printing, and will be ready to be delivered to the Proprietors to-morrow.

The Court then proceeded to take the same into
consideration.

consideration, when the resolutions of the General Court of 5th May last were called for and read.

It was then moved, and on the question,

Resolved, That this Court do highly approve the vigilance, attention, and able conduct of the Court of Directors, in their negotiation with His Majesty's Ministers for the Renewal of the Charter, and that, for the purpose of taking the important subject now submitted to them into their most serious deliberation, the Court do adjourn unto Tuesday the 19th instant.—

And the Court adjourned accordingly.

No. LXXVII.

RESOLUTIONS of a GENERAL COURT OF PROPRIETORS, held the 5th May 1812, referred to in the preceding Minutes.

Resolved Unanimously, That this Court has learnt with deep concern and surprize, that His Majesty's Ministers have been induced to change the view they first entertained of the propriety of confining to the Port of London the returns of the trade to India, now to be permitted to all British subjects. That the measure of opening the Outports to vessels of all descriptions from India, comprehending in that term the Eastern Islands, appears to this Court to be fraught with consequences ruinous to the Company, and all the long train of interests connected with it; by removing from the port of London the greater part of the Indian trade, which it has hitherto enjoyed; by rendering useless many of the expensive establishments formed there for the merchandize and shipping of that trade, and throwing out of bread many thousands of persons who now derive constant employment from it; by deranging the practice and frustrating the end of stated public sales, which are useful and important, both to the Country and the Company, who are necessarily restricted to this practice; but,
above

above all, by affording facilities for the smuggling of Teas into the ports and harbours of England, Scotland, and Ireland, to an extent unlimited, and, as this Court apprehend, uncontrollable. That the consequences of this must be, the destruction of the Company's China trade, their best source of commercial profit; the failure of their dividend; the depreciation of their stock; and unless a fund is provided from some other source for the payment of the dividend, inability on their part to continue to perform the functions assigned to them in the Government of British India. That if the constitution by which the Indian Empire is now administered should thus be subverted, the excellent system of civil and military service formed under the Company, and maintainable only by such a body, will be broken down; the tranquillity and happiness of the vast population which that empire contains, the interests of this country in Asia, and its constitution at home, will be imminently endangered.

That the professed object for which the proposed changes are to be made, and such immense sacrifices hazarded, namely, the increase of the commerce of this kingdom, cannot be in any great degree attained, there being no practicability of extending materially the use of our manufactures among the Indian people, the tonnage allotted by the Company, or afforded by Indian ships in the management of individuals, for such exports, not having been fully occupied. Neither does it appear practicable largely to augment the importation of profitable commodities from thence; of all which the example of the American trade to the East is a proof, British Manufactures, which they could easily have procured, making no part of it, nor their returns exhibiting any new articles of importance. That therefore the trade now enjoyed by the Company and individuals will be the only certain trade to which new adventurers can have recourse. And this will be no addition to the commerce of the Country, but only a transfer from one set of hands to another: so that, old establishments will be subverted, without substituting any thing equally good in their place; and, to all

all appearance, with great detriment to the nation, particularly in the defalcation of a large part of the duties now collected on Tea, to the amount of four millions sterling per annum; for all which defalcation, whether, one, or two, or three millions, new taxes must be laid on the people

That the cause of the Company has been deeply injured by prejudice, ignorance, erroneous assumptions, and of late by extensive combinations, and by unfair representation, canvas, and intimidation: in all which the merits and rights of the Company, the political interests of British India, and of this country as connected with them, have been left out of sight, and the single object of the extension of commerce, an object too only of speculation, in opposition to past experience, is the governing principle.

This Court however confidently hope, that Parliament will not decide the fate of the Company, on the representations and demands of private interests, but on just and comprehensive views of national policy; and the Court must also believe that His Majesty's Ministers are too enlightened and equitable, finally to adopt any measure calculated to destroy the commercial profits of the Company, and thereby to disable them from performing their political functions. This Court therefore entirely approving, both of the firmness which their Directors have shewn in maintaining the interests of the Company, and of the manner in which they have, in the papers now produced by them, defended those interests, doth recommend it to them to persevere in the negociation with His Majesty's Ministers upon the same principles: assured of the determination of this Court to support them to the utmost, in maintaining the permanence of the Company and the national interests which are involved in their stability.

Resolved Unanimously, That the thanks of this Court be given to Randle Jackson, Esq. for his very luminous and excellent speech this day; for the great zeal, ability and industry he has on various occasions, and particularly on this, displayed for the honour and advantage of this Company.

Resolved

Resolved Unanimously, That the warmest thanks of this General Court be offered to the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and Court of Directors of this Company, for their very able conduct in the negotiation with Government for the renewal of the Charter; alike evincing the most luminous ideas of the best interests of this Company, and their most honorable conduct in the management of so important a concern.

AN
ADDRESS
TO THE PUBLIC,
ON AN
Important Subject,
CONNECTED WITH
THE RENEWAL OF THE CHARTER
OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY.

By ROBERT HALL, A. M.

LONDON:

Printed by W. Henshine, Chequer Yard, Dowgate Hill.

PUBLISHED BY JOSIAH CONDER, BUCKLESBURY.

1813.

AN
A D D R E S S,
&c. &c.

AS the subject of the renewal of the Charter of the East India Company is shortly to come before Parliament, with a view to a final decision, it is presumed that it will not be deemed impertinent to invite the attention of the Legislature to a particular connected with that subject, which is judged of high importance. The point to which we refer, respects the propriety of inserting a clause in the new Charter, authorizing the peaceable dissemination of Christian principles in India. For want of such a provision, the Missionaries who have lately visited that country, have been under the necessity of going there by the circuitous route of America, besides meeting with considerable obstructions in their attempts to settle, and being exposed

to much vexation and interruption in their quiet efforts to plant the Christian faith. It must surely be considered as an extraordinary fact, that in a country under the government of a people professing Christianity, *that* religion should be the only one that is discountenanced and suppressed.

That the ~~most~~ complete toleration should be extended to the various modes of belief prevailing in those remote dependencies of our empire, and that none of the inhabitants should be subjected to the slightest inconvenience on account of their adherence to the religious system of their forefathers, is readily admitted; nor would any event give more serious concern to the writer of this address, than ^{an} interference with that right of private judgment which he deems an inalienable prerogative of human nature. But for a Christian nation to give a decided preference to polytheism and idolatry by prohibiting the dissemination of a purer faith, and thus employ its powers in suppressing the truth, and prolonging the existence of the most degrading and deplorable superstitions, is a line of conduct equally repugnant to the dictates of religion, and the maxims of sound policy. To oppose by force the propagation of revealed truth,

from any worldly considerations whatever, is such a sacrifice of right to expediency, as can be justified on no principles but what will lead to the subversion of all morality and religion.

If Christianity be a communication from heaven, to oppose its extension is to *fight against God*; an impiety which, under every possible combination of circumstances, must expect a severe rebuke; but the guilt of which is inconceivably aggravated, when the opposition proceeds from the professors of that very religion. We have no example in the history of the world of such a conduct; we have no precedent of a people prohibiting the propagation of their own faith; a species of intolerance exposed not only to the objections which lie in common against all restraints upon conscience, but to a train of absurdities peculiar to itself, at the same time that it imposes a character of meanness on the ruling powers, by the virtual confession it includes, that they have either no religion, or a religion of which they are ashamed. As the equality of all religions, the distinguishing tenet of deism, is alike repugnant to the dictates of reason, and the oracles of truth, so it is ill calculated to conciliate the esteem of Eastern nations, on whom it can have no other effect than to desecrate

the British name, by depriving it of the veneration which nature, unsophisticated by impiety, has inseparably connected with sentiments of religious belief. Powerfully impressed as they are with religious principles and prejudices, however erroneous, we can scarcely adopt a more effectual expedient for securing their contempt and abhorrence, than an avowed indifference to whatever concerns that momentous subject.

It is an undeniable fact, that no persons have been so popular in India, as the men who have exerted themselves with the most steady and persevering zeal in the dissemination of Christian principles; of which we have a striking example in the excellent Schwartz, for many years a Missionary on the coast of Coromandel, who, by his wise and benevolent conduct, rendered, on various occasions, the most essential service to the British interests, and became the object of the enthusiastic attachment of the natives.*

The attempt to propagate Christianity in India is not a new experiment; it has been now tried for more than a century: it received the warmest support of George the First, of il-

* See the Reports of the Society at Bartlett's Buildings, for promoting Christian Knowledge.

lustrious memory, as well as of the then Archbishop of Canterbury; and in the hands of Ziegenbalgus, and his successors, was crowned with distinguished success.* Similar attempts have been more recently made in Bengal, and the adjacent provinces; and several Christian societies have been planted by the labours of Missionaries in those parts of India. It deserves particular attention, that no inconvenience, not even the slightest, has arisen from these enterprises; and that whatever agitation has been witnessed among the natives at different times, the propagation of Christianity has never been the cause, or even the pretext. When intelligence of the insurrection at Vellore reached England, there were not wanting persons who endeavoured to ascribe it to the jealousy and uneasiness excited by the efforts of Missionaries; but no attempt could be more unsuccessful, since, in the course of a most accurate investigation of the circumstances connected with that event, we have it, on the authority of Lord Teignmouth, that not even the name of a Missionary was mentioned. It arose from causes totally distinct. Thus

* See the excellent Letters from his Majesty and the Archbishop, addressed to Ziegenbalgus, in Buchanan's *Ecclesiastical Researches*.

have we the experience of more than a century to justify the conclusion, that nothing is to be feared for the tranquillity of India from the operations of Missionaries, subject, as they must ever be, to the control of the constituted authorities.

The number of natives who profess Christianity is not small nor inconsiderable. The disciples of Schwartz and his successors on the Eastern side of the peninsula, amount to fifty thousand; and the Syrian Christians, on the coast of Malabar, to several hundred thousands; the greater part of them converted from the Bramins, and the higher classes. They have subsisted there from the fifth century, are in possession of one hundred and nineteen churches, some of them sumptuous and splendid edifices; and their superior elevation of character and purity of manners are attested, on the most respectable authority, to be such as the possession of Christian faith might be expected to inspire.* In addition to this; translations of the New Testament, in almost all the vernacular dialects of India, have been recently circulated, and a considerable number of the natives are assiduously and constantly employed in preaching

* See the interesting narrative of Dr. Buchanan's visit to the Syrian Christians, in his *Ecclesiastical Researches*.

the gospel; so that it is too late to think of checking its career: the possession it has taken of the public mind will necessarily render all such attempts impracticable. The only question which remains to be decided, is, whether its further propagation shall be left solely in the hands of natives, or whether intelligent and respectable Europeans who come more immediately into contact with the British government, and in whose prudence and experience greater confidence may be reposed, shall be allowed to superintend its movements. The good seed having struck its root too deep ever to be extirpated, the only alternative is, either to leave it to its spontaneous growth, aided by the labour of Hindoos, or to place it under a more skilful and enlightened cultivation.

Though strangers to the theory, the inhabitants of Hindostan have been long familiarized to the practice of toleration. In no part of the world is there a greater variety of sects, or more contrariety in the modes of religious belief, subsisting without the slightest disturbance: even the grand division of the natives into Hindoos and Mahometans has continued for ages, without interruption to the public harmony.

But if nothing is to be feared from the dissemination of Christian principles in India, the advantages resulting from it, whether we consult the interest of the natives, or our own, are too obvious to require to be enumerated, and too important to be overlooked. With respect to its aspect on the natives, will it be contended that a more powerful instrument can be devised for meliorating and raising their character, than grafting upon it the principles of our holy religion, which, wherever it prevails, never fails to perfect whatever is good, and to correct whatever is evil, in the human constitution; and to which Europe is chiefly indebted for those enlightened views, and that high sense of probity and honour, which distinguish it so advantageously in a comparison with Asiatic nations? The prevalence of Christianity every where marks the boundary which separates the civilized from the barbarous or semi-barbarous parts of the world: let but this boundary be extended, and the country included within its limits may be considered as redeemed from the waste, and prepared to receive the precious seeds of civilization and improvement. Independently of eternal prospects, it may be safely affirmed, that

polytheism and idolatry draw after them such a train of absurd and dismal consequences, as to be quite incompatible with the due expansion of the human intellect, and necessarily to prevent the operations of reason from reaching their maturity and perfection. Wherever Christianity prevails, mankind are uniformly progressive: it communicates that just manner of thinking upon the most important subjects, which, extending its influence thence to every department of speculative and moral truth, inspires a freedom of enquiry and an elevation of sentiment, which raise the disciples of Revelation immeasurably above the level of unassisted nature.

The Hindoo superstition is characterised by a puerile extravagance of conception, as hostile to the cultivation of reason, as the enormity of its practices is revolting to humanity. It oppresses the former by its gigantic absurdities: it extinguishes the latter by the cruelty of its rites. The annual destruction of female infants in Guzarat and Kutch is estimated at fifteen or twenty thousand*. Till lately, it had been the custom from time immemorial to immolate, at the island of Saugor, and at other places es-

* See Moore's Hindoo Infanticide.

teemed holy, on the banks of the Ganges, human victims, or to destroy them by sharks. From a late investigation, it appears that the number of women who sacrifice themselves on the funeral pile of their husbands, within thirty miles of Calcutta, is, on an average, upwards of two hundred*. A multitude of courtezans are uniformly attached to the principal temples; and the most obscene symbols exhibited to inflame the passions of their votaries†.

While the history of all times and nations evinces the inseparable alliance of impurity and cruelty with the worship of idols, is it consistent with the dictates of humanity, not merely to witness these enormities without attempting to correct them, but to oppose the communication of the only remedy which is capable of effecting a cure?

The base venality, together with the spirit of artifice and intrigue, which distinguish the natives of Hindostan, have rendered it the theatre of perpetual revolutions, robbed its native governments of every principle of stability, and rendered poisonings, assassinations, and treachery, expedients so constantly resorted to by

* See Buchanan's Memoir, p. 96, Appendix. In a Letter lately received from Dr. Carey, he estimates the whole number of women annually sacrificed throughout India at ten thousand.

† See Sonnerat's Voyage aux Indes et a la Chine, p. 219.

the parties in conflict, that it is impossible to peruse its history without shuddering. To affirm that there is nothing in their superstitions calculated to correct their vices, is saying little, when, in fact, they derive a powerful sanction from the maxims of their religion, and from the character of their gods. There is not one of their deities portrayed in their Shasters, whose moral character is tolerably correct. How much Christianity is wanted to exalt the sentiments, and purify the principles of this corrupt and effeminate race, is too obvious to need to be insisted on.

That their conversion is practicable, is ascertained beyond controversy by the success which has already attended the experiment; that no apprehensions are to be entertained for the permanence of British power, in consequence of the attempt, is manifest from experience; that to consult the welfare of the subject is the first duty of the sovereign, and the chief distinction betwixt the exercise of legitimate authority and the operation of lawless tyranny, will not be disputed in an enlightened age; and that the Christian religion is the greatest blessing we have received, the most precious boon we can bestow, none but infidels will deny. It surely will not be asserted, that we

are under less obligation to communicate a good, because that good may be traced to the immediate interposition of Heaven, or because it contains the seed and germ of eternal felicity. He who believes the Bible, must know that the heathen are to be given to Christ for his inheritance, the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession, and that therefore to *forbid his being preached to the Gentiles that they may be saved*, is an attempt to contravene the purposes of the Most High, equally impotent and presumptuous. *Let the potsherds strive against the potsherds of the earth, but woe unto him who striveth with his Maker.* Such conduct, persevered in, must infallibly draw down the judgments of God on the people to whose infatuated counsels it is to be ascribed. Whoever considers the aspect of the times, must be invincibly prejudiced not to discern the symptoms of a peculiar crisis, the distinguishing features of which, are the rapid subversion of human institutions, and the advancement of the kingdom of God. *The stone cut out without hands has already fallen upon the image, and made it like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor:* the next event we are to look for in the order of Providence, is its enlarging itself, till it becomes a great mountain, and fills the whole earth. If there ever was a period

when the propagation of the true religion might be resisted with impunity, that period is passed ; and the Master of the universe is now addressing the greatest potentates in the language of an ancient oracle:—" Be wise now, ye kings ; be instructed, ye judges of the earth." Encompassed as we are with the awful tokens of a presiding and avenging Providence, dissolving the fabrics of human wisdom, extinguishing the most ancient dynasties, and tearing up kingdoms by their roots, it would be the height of infatuation any longer to oppose the reign of God, whose purposes will pursue their career, in spite of the efforts of human policy, which must either yield their co-operation, or be broken by its force.

All that is desired, on this occasion, is simply that the word of God may be permitted to have free course. Whether it be consistent with sound policy for the British government to employ any part of its resources in aid of the cause of Christianity in India, is a question which it is not necessary to discuss, while its friends confine their views to a simple toleration, and request merely that its teachers may not be harassed or impeded in their attempts to communicate instruction to the natives. Before such a liberty can be withheld, the principles.

of toleration must be abandoned; nor will it be practicable to withhold it without exciting a sanguinary persecution; where men are to be found who will eagerly embrace the crown of martyrdom rather than relinquish the performance of what appears to them a high and awful duty. And what a spectacle will it exhibit, for a Christian government to employ force in the support of idolatry, and the suppression of truth.

Instead of dwelling on the necessary effects of such a measure, let us consider for a moment the beneficial consequences likely to result from an opposite mode of conduct. On that improvement of character which the cordial reception of revealed truth cannot fail to operate, it will be easy to graft some of the best habits and institutions of European nations, advancing gradually through an interminable series of social order and happiness. Under the fostering hand of religion, reason will develop her resources, and philosophy mature her fruits. Nor will the advantages accruing to the British interests, from a change so salutary, be less certain, or less important. The possession of the same faith will occasion such an approximation of the habits and sentiments of the natives to our own, as will render the union

firm, by rendering it cordial. While a total opposition in their views on the most important points subsists betwixt the sovereign and the subjects;—while objects adored by the one are held in contempt and abhorrence by the other; they may be artificially connected, but it is impossible they should be united; it is rather a juxtaposition of inanimate parts, than an union of minds. In such a situation the social tie wants that cementing principle which is requisite to give it strength and stability: it is a strained and unnatural position, in which things are held contrary to their native bent; in which authority is upheld merely by force, without deriving support from that sympathy of congenial sentiment, which forms its truest basis. Hence the precarious tenure by which European states have successively held dominion in India, where all has been submitted to the arbitration of the sword; where, the moment force has been withdrawn or relaxed, authority has ceased, and each, in its turn, has gained a transient ascendancy, none a firm and tranquil possession. In order to obviate the mischiefs arising from such a state of things, it is extremely desirable, providing it be practicable, to impart to our subjects in the East, some principle which shall draw them into

closer contact with the ruling power; and what principle equally operative and efficient with the possession of a common religion? Though the universal diffusion of Christianity over India will probably be a work of time, its influence in strengthening the social compact by augmenting the attachment of the natives, will be uniformly progressive; and while external tranquillity is secured by the superiority of our policy and our arms, we shall every year be making our way into their hearts: we shall be establishing an interior dominion, and may confidently reckon on the unshaken fidelity of every Christian convert. This is not mere conjecture: for in all the trying vicissitudes experienced by the British interests in India, the Hindoo Christians have invariably approved themselves our firmest friends and abettors.

Though the writer of this is afraid of being tedious, there is another consideration connected with the present subject, which he deems of too much importance not to be mentioned. The possession of India, it is well known, is an object to which our enemies are looking with eager desire; accompanied with jealousy at that splendour which the vastness of our oriental empire confers on the British name and character. No efforts will they deem too

great, no sacrifices too expensive, to rob us of so bright a jewel. What events may arise hereafter to facilitate the accomplishment of their wishes, it is beyond the power of human sagacity to conjecture; one thing is certain, that nothing will oppose a more formidable obstacle to their designs than the diffusion of Christianity. They who have received that inestimable blessing, will infallibly cling with ardour to the people to whom they are indebted for it. They will feel more than a natural affection to the country which has opened to them the prospect of immortality, and nourished them with the bread of life. In all the struggles to retain or to acquire dominion in the East, the Christian portion of the population will, to a man, be the zealous partizans of Great Britain; a firm and immoveable band, whose devoted attachment will in some measure compensate for their inferiority of number. In this species of policy too, in this most unexceptionable mode of conciliating esteem, we shall have nothing to apprehend from the intrigues of our rivals, who are equally indisposed and disqualified to engage in such an enterprize.

If we consider what may be the probable intention of Providence in opening so extensive a communication betwixt Europe and the most

ancient seats of Idolatry, and more especially of subjecting such immense territories in the East to the British arms, we can conceive no end more worthy of the Deity in these momentous changes than to facilitate the propagation of true religion.

Our acquisition of power there has been so rapid, so extensive, and so disproportioned to the limits of our native empire, that there are few events in which the interposition of Providence may be more distinctly traced. From the possession of a few forts in different parts of the coast, which we were permitted to erect for the protection of our commerce, we have risen, in the course of less than half a century, to a summit of power, whence we exert a direct dominion over fifty millions, and a paramount influence over a hundred millions of men. By an astonishing train of events, a large portion of the population of the oriental world has been subjected to the control of an Island placed in the extremities of the West of Europe. Kingdoms have fallen after kingdoms, and provinces after provinces, with a rapidity which resembles the incidents of a romance, rather than the accustomed order of political events. It is remarkable, too, that this career of conquest has uniformly directed its steps towards those parts

of the earth, and to those only, which are the primeval seats of pagan idolatry; forming an intimate connexion betwixt the most enlightened of Christian nations, and the victims of the most inveterate and deplorable system of superstition mankind have ever witnessed. As we must be blind not to discern the finger of God in these transactions, it behoves us to consider for what purposes we are lifted to so high a preeminence.

It is certainly not to be ascribed to a blind predilection, which aims at no other object than to gratify ambition, by extending the power, and augmenting the grandeur of Great Britain; a motive too puerile to satisfy the requisitions of human reason, much more to limit the views of an eternal mind.

The possession of sovereignty over extensive kingdoms is a sacred trust, for which nations are not less responsible than individuals, a delegation from the supreme fountain of power; and as the unalterable laws of nature forbid us to confound men with things, or to forget the reciprocal obligations subsisting betwixt the sovereign and the subject, we can scarcely be guilty of a greater crime than to consider the latter as merely subservient to the interests of the former. Every individual of the immense

population subjected to our sway, has claims on our justice and benevolence which we cannot with impunity neglect: the wants and sufferings of every individual utter a voice which goes to the heart of humanity. In return for their allegiance, we owe them protection and instruction, together with every effort to meliorate their condition, and improve their character. It is but fair to acknowledge, that we have not been wholly insensible to these claims, and that the extension of our power has been hitherto highly beneficial. But why, in the series of improvements, has Christianity been neglected? Why has the communication of the greatest good we have to bestow, been hitherto fettered and restrained; and while every modification of idolatry, not excepting the bloody and obscene orgies of Juggernaut, has received support, has every attempt to instruct the natives in the things which belong to their peace, been suppressed? It will surely appear surprising to posterity, that a nation, glorying in the purity of its faith as its highest distinction, should suffer its transactions in the East to be characterised by a spirit of infidelity, as though it were imagined the foundations of empire could be laid only in apostasy and impiety; at a moment, too, when

Europe, convulsed to its centre, beholds these frantic erections swept with the besom of destruction. Their astonishment will be the more excited, when they compare our conduct in this instance with the unprecedented exertions we are making for the diffusion of religious knowledge in other directions; with the operations of the Bible Society, which, formed for the sole purpose of conveying the oracles of God to all quarters, has risen to an importance that entitles it to be regarded as a national concern; in which statesmen, nobles, and prelates, have enrolled their names, emulous of the honour of advancing to the utmost the noble design of the institution; with the Bartlett's Buildings Society, employed for upwards of a century in attempts to convert the natives of Hindostan, which includes in the list of its members every bishop, and every dignified ecclesiastic in the realm; with the numerous translations going on in all the dialects of the East, to which the learned, both in Europe and in Asia, are looking with eager expectation. When posterity shall compare the conduct we are reprobating with these facts, how great their astonishment, to find the piety of the nation has suffered itself to lie prostrate at the feet of a few individuals, the open or disguised enemies of the faith of Jesus!

It is impossible, in connexion with the circumstances to which we have adverted, to mistake the real sentiments of the British people, or not to perceive that the illustrious associations already mentioned are entitled, on a question of this nature, to be considered as its genuine and legitimate organ.

It ought never to be forgotten, in the consideration of this subject, that it is inseparably connected with liberty of conscience. Religious toleration implies not merely the freedom of thought, which no human power can restrain, and which equally subsists under the most tyrannical and the most enlightened governments; it comprehends, also, the freedom of communication, and the right of discussion, within the limits of sober and dispassionate argument. He who is impressed with a conviction of the importance of the Christian verities, it is reasonable to suppose, will be anxious to communicate them: he will probably feel as St. Paul did in a similar situation, whose spirit was stirred within him when he beheld Athens wholly given up to idolatry: he may be touched with so strong a commiseration for the victims of religious imposture, and so powerful a sense of the duty of attempting to correct it, as to be ready to adopt the language employed

on another occasion—"We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."

None but the determined enemy of truth and decency will deny that such a state of mind is possible, or that it is more allied to virtue than to vice. If at this juncture, a superior power interposes, and says, You shall not impart your conviction, however strong; you shall not attempt to dispel delusions the most gross, or correct enormities the most flagrant, though no other means are thought of but calm expostulation and argument; in what, I would ask, does such an interference differ from persecution? Here is conscience on one side, an enlightened conscience, as all Christians must confess, and force on the other; which is precisely the position in which things are placed by every instance of persecution. If Christianity was ever persecuted; if the martyrologies of all times and nations are not to be exploded as mere fiction and romance; this is persecution, and persecution of a most portentous character, being directed, in support of a system we detest, against the religion by which we expect to be saved. Here are a people, indignant posterity will exclaim, who profess subjection to the Saviour of the world, and hold in their hands the oracles which foretell the universal extension of his dominion, who

yet make it a crime to breathe his name in pagan lands, and employ their power to fence out the scene of his future triumphs, and render it, as far as possible, inaccessible to his religion. With ~~whole~~ efficacious sincerity, and edifying fervor, must this people have prayed, "thy kingdom come!"--Admirable successors of the Constantines and the Charlemagnes of a former age! Faithful stewards of the manifold gifts of God!

When the parallel betwixt the conduct of modern missionaries and the first preachers of the gospel is insisted on, it is usual to attempt to annul the conclusion deduced from the comparison, by remarking that the latter were possessed of miraculous powers, to which the former make no pretensions. That this circumstance occasions a real disparity in the means of insuring success, will be readily acknowledged; but that it makes any difference whatever in the right of imparting instruction, will not hastily be conceded. Had such supernatural interpositions never accompanied the publication of the gospel, it had wanted its credentials, and been essentially defective in the proof of its divine origination. It was necessary for a new dispensation, when first ushered into the world, to be accompanied with a direct appeal to the senses, with the visible signatures of a divine hand; and it is the

glory of our holy religion to have possessed them in a variety and splendour that astonished mankind, and laid a foundation for the faith and obedience of all succeeding ages. At its *entrance*, such an ~~economy~~ *economy* was requisite to prepare the way. But when these miraculous occurrences, after enduring the severest scrutiny, under circumstances the most favourable to investigation, were committed to writing, and formed a compact body of external evidences; when the supernatural origin of the Christian faith had taken its place amongst the most indubitable of recorded facts, it was no longer necessary to be continually repeating the same proofs; nor consistent with the majesty of Heaven, to be ever laying the foundation afresh. It was time to assume the truth of religion as a thing proved.

As we were none of us eye-witnesses of the miracles wrought in the primitive ages, but rest our belief on historical documents, it is not impossible, as far as the truth of Christianity is concerned, to lay open to pagans the sources of our conviction, and by that means to place them in nearly the same situation with ourselves; to say nothing of that internal evidence *which commends itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* This is actually the mode

in which the light of Revelation has been chiefly diffused since the cessation of miraculous gifts; which, in the opinion of some, terminated with the apostles, in the judgment of others, were continued through the first three centuries, but are universally allowed to have ceased long before the conversion of the northern and western parts of Europe. Did the disciples of St. Columba, who spread Christianity through the German provinces on the Baltic, through the kingdoms of Sweden, Norway, and Denmark, owe their success to miraculous powers? Did St. Austin and his associates, who laid the foundations of the religious establishments in England, make such pretensions?

To demand miracles in order to justify the propagation of Christianity in pagan countries, is to attribute to it a state of perpetual weakness and pupillage: it is to cancel all that is past, to accuse the most illustrious missionaries of enthusiasm, and the faith of our forefathers of folly and credulity. The principle we are attempting to expose, not content with inflicting a stigma on a particular sect or party, involves the whole Christian community established in these realms, in the foul reproach of being the illegitimate offspring of fanaticism, or imposture. It is only necessary for us to place

ourselves in imagination at that period, when the foundation of the Church was laid in this and in other European countries, to perceive that the same objections which are made to the present efforts of missionaries, apply with equal force to those that are past. They who first exhibited the mystery of the cross to the view of our rude ancestors, were equally destitute of miraculous powers with ourselves. But they felt the power of the world to come: they were deeply impressed with the dignity and excellence of the Christian dispensation, and touched with a passionate regard for the honour of God and the salvation of souls. These were the motives which impelled them forward; these the weapons of their warfare. The ridicule attempted to be poured on men of the same principles and character, engaged in the same object, is, in fact, reflected on these their predecessors, and is precisely a repetition of the conduct of the impenitent Jews, who honoured the memory, and built the sepulchres of departed, while they were imbuing their hands in the blood of living prophets. We collect, with eager veneration, the names and achievements of the first heralds of the gospel; we dwell with exultation on the heroic fortitude they displayed in encountering

the opposition of fierce barbarians, amidst their efforts to reclaim them from a sanguinary superstition, and to imbue their minds with the principles of an enlightened piety. We look up to them as to a superior order of beings, and in the character of the instructors of mankind in the sublimest lessons, entitled to a distinction above all Greek, above all Roman fame; yet, with ineffable absurdity, and a most contemptible littleness of mind, if it please Providence, at distant intervals, to raise up a few congenial spirits, we are prepared to treat them with levity and scorn. It is the misfortune of some men to labour under an incapacity of discerning living worth;---a sort of moral virtuosi, who form their estimate of characters, as the antiquarian of coins, by the rust of antiquity,

Urit enim fulgore suo, qui prægravat artes
Infra se positas : extinctus amabitur idem.

HORACE.

I would not be understood, in the remarks made on this part of the subject, to explode the expectation of the renewal of miraculous agency; which some of the most able divines have unquestionably formed, from a perusal of the prophetic oracles. The inference I would wish to establish is sim-

ply this, that we are not justified in neglecting the means of propagating the truth we already possess, by the absence of higher succour; and that it would ill become the Christian world to abandon the attempts to convert the inhabitants of pagan countries, in deference to the clamours of men, who demand miracles merely because they believe they will not be vouchsafed, and decry the ordinary methods of procedure, because they are within our reach, and have already been crowned with success. To such the language of the prophet Amos may be addressed with propriety;---*Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord! to what end is it for you? The day of the Lord is darkness and not light.*---
Ch. v. 18.

FINIS.

OBSERVATIONS
ON THE
TERRITORIAL RIGHTS
COMMERCIAL PRIVILEGES
OF THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY;

WITH A VIEW TO THE
Renewal of the Company's Charter;
IN A LETTER TO A
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT.

"The maintenance of the MONOPOLY of the EAST INDIA COMPANY, is even more important to the POLITICAL INTERESTS of the Empire, than it is to the COMMERCIAL INTERESTS of the COMPANY."

By HENRY DUNN, Esq. of the Middle Temple, Barrister at Law.

LONDON.

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By G. ALLEN, 10, N. B. STREET, LONDON.

1813.

ADVERTISEMENT,

THE following pages are the substance of several Letters, written in the course of the last summer, on the ~~policy~~ of renewing the Charter of the East India Company. These Letters had the good fortune, in their original shape, to make an impression, favourable to the view of the writer, on the mind of a distinguished Member of the House of Commons, to whom they were addressed; which induced a subsequent request, on his part, that they might be communicated to the public in a connected form, with some scattered notes on certain heads, which appeared to stand in need of explanation, from the loose manner in which they were originally ~~treated~~. A request so flattering the Author could not withstand; but

he fears lest it may have betrayed him into the weakness of believing, that the effect of his observations may be general, when all their influence is owing to private and personal partiality.

ON THE
POLICY OF RENEWING
THE
EAST INDIA COMPANY'S CHARTER.

TO ———, M. P.

DEAR SIR,

YOU entertain too high a notion of my knowledge of Indian affairs, in supposing that it may enable me to afford you any material information on the almost inexhaustible subjects, connecting themselves with the renewal of the East India Company's Charter. It is true, that, like many others, I have resided several years in the East, but have not brought away with me, I am afraid, so much local intelligence, as might be thought to correspond with the length of my residence. This may be ascribed, in some sort, to my not having been employed in the service of the East India Company; a circumstance, that might have opened to me various sources and opportunities of information, which are closed and denied to the merely licensed sojourner, who is usually left to find his way by his own lights, and his own researches. But though this circumstance may abridge the sum, and the value, of what I may have to com-

municate, it will have the advantage of flowing from a pure fount, uncontaminated by a suspicion of partiality or of prejudice. Whatsoever I possess, you have a right to demand—and I impart it without further apology.

I entirely agree with you, in thinking, that the question of the renewal of the Charter is agitated at an unfavourable season, and under circumstances most inopportune. The confined state of our external commercial relations, from the political situation of Europe, and consequent mercantile distress, have made our manufacturers and merchants most anxious for the discovery of available openings for trade, and naturally jealous of every species of exclusion. It is not to be wondered, then, from the known operation of individual interest, that men should look to their supposed immediate good, rather than to more remote advantage, by seeking the extension of the trade to India, with the expectation of gain to themselves, though it should be at the hazard of the safe course, in which it has been hitherto conducted, and of the national benefits derived from it. The interests and passions set in motion by the influence of these exciting causes, have been, unadvisedly, and certainly unintentionally, aggravated by a general and loose declaration of an official organ, giving colour and countenance to the clamour, universally raised, for a free and open trade.

I shall not stay to enquire into the motives of Ministers, whatever they may be, whether proceeding out of large political considerations, personal or party relations, or official apprehensions, that have led them to declare in favour of the public pretension to the participation of the Indian trade: I lament, only, that such declaration

has been unfortunately made, and in so unreserved and unqualified a manner; without any explanation of the policy inducing it, or the objects it has in view. Without a development of this nature, the public may form, as it is to be feared they have done, erroneous and extravagant notions, that Ministers never meant to raise, and may not be permitted to realize; but which, when once indulged, it will be difficult to repel by reason, or subdue by authority.

There is, apparently, a wide and sensible difference between the expectations of the mercantile world and the intentions of Ministers, so far as they are expressed, as to the meditated extension of the trade to India. Each of these opposed parties agree in principle, though they differ in degree, as to the participation of commerce, to which the public ought to be admitted, within the chartered limits of the Company: and neither of them wish to interfere, it seems, with the territorial possessions, or with the establishments, civil or military, by which they are governed and protected. The latter they would leave untouched; so that a commercial intercourse, more or less, be permitted with them, and with other friendly local states, within the circle of the Company's boundaries. So that the simple question, whether the Charter shall be renewed or not, is not likely to arise for discussion, or, if it do, it will not seemingly encounter any contrariety of judgment. It is determined, on all sides, that it be renewed, though with certain modifications, according to the different conclusions of men, as to the latitude or quantity of them.

I congratulate you and the House most sincerely, that you are not again exposed to any difficulties and

embarrassments about the principles of government, adapted, or supposed to be adapted, to the British Indian possessions—to the power to be lodged in the hands of those exercising the chief authorities, or the manner of using it. These, as we hear of no material intended regulations, may generally be understood as standing on a safe and fair footing; free from the reproach of arbitrary rule on the one hand, and of oppression on the other. The revolution of the public sentiment in this respect, even in a time of general ferment, is not less complimentary to the national justice, than it is honourable to the East India Company; who, by a wise policy, in awarding a most ample provision to their public functionaries, have removed the temptation to offence, and have secured the fidelity of those in trust, by raising, in every well-constituted mind in their service, so general an abhorrence of abuse, as to render the practice of it dangerous, and consequently rare. Thus, from the acknowledged melioration of the administration of the powers of government, and improvement in the condition of the native subjects of India, no nice and perplexing considerations will present themselves, that might have a tendency to shake the established rule, together with the very foundation of our eastern acquisitions; and, eventually, by the change and shifting of power, from known to unknown hands, might endanger and overturn the hitherto equipoised parts of our own original and happy constitution.

But though this evil be removed by time and fortunate occurrences out of the way of the Legislature, while devising or fixing a future government for our eastern possessions, its deliberations will not be unembarrassed

by evils of another sort, which the times and circumstances have engendered. If the Legislature be not called upon to protect the rights and interests of a distant and foreign people, it will be importuned with a loud and boisterous clamour, arising out of imaginary pretensions and grievances, at its very door. Hence the evil escaped, may be more than counterbalanced by the evil super-added.

It would seem to require extraordinary prudence to moderate the public expectation, stirred and animated as it is at this time by public feeling; and more especially, as that feeling has unexpectedly received a stimulant, where some would have looked for a corrective or check. Whether Ministers, from a want of confidence in their yet untried strength, or from a desire of conciliating the public mind to their initiatory measures, at first inconsiderately gave way to the popular pretensions, it is not necessary to examine, nor material in the issue. They have since had time to reconsider their act, and what is still better for their ministerial reputation, and, perhaps, existence, they have had an opportunity, by a dissolution of Parliament in the interim, of placing their power on a more ascertained, if not on a more permanent footing, if they have the wisdom and the courage to adopt a course congenial to their station, to act on their own policy, unswayed by the cry of the giddy crowd on the one hand, or powerful solicitation on the other. Such a conduct is more open to their adoption, from the circumstance, which for another purpose has been condemned, that, though they have pledged themselves to admit the public to the participation of the Indian trade, they have not bound themselves to any specific plan, by which it is

to be regulated, or the exact extent to which it is to be carried. All that the Board of Controul, speaking for Ministers, have at present declared, is, that the public shall be admitted, by the new Charter, to share in the trade, with the single exception of China, within the limits hitherto reserved to the exclusive commerce of the East India Company. This concession, however, is not absolute, but circumscribed by terms, to be hereafter discussed and adjusted by the Legislature, in contemplation of the rights of the Company, already in possession of the entire trade, and the indispensable means of prosecuting it. There is a safe interval for repentance, which, if Ministers do not embrace the benefit of for themselves, it is to be hoped, that the Legislature will employ, in carefully and cautiously examining their questionable policy.

Whatever the views of administration may be, it is yet to be learnt, what remote advantages are to be expected from the intended modification of the Company's Charter, for the prospect of present good they profess to disregard themselves, and to discourage in others.* The Public,

* Observe what Lord Melville says on this subject, in his Letter of the 21st of March, 1812.

"You will do me the justice to recollect, that in all our discussions on this subject, both recently, and on former occasions, the admission of the ships of merchants in this country into the trade of India, in concurrence with those of the Company, has never been urged as a measure, from which much immediate benefit would, in my opinion, be derived, either to the country, or to the individuals who might engage in the speculation; and I am certainly not without considerable apprehension, that, at least, on the first opening of the trade, the public expectation, as to the British territories in India affording any considerable outlet for British manufactures, beyond the amount of our present exports, may be disappointed."

on the other hand, under the influence of a partial patronage, demand a full, free and unbounded enjoyment, as of natural right, of all the branches of Indian Commerce. They look at India, without reflecting on the length and nature of our intercourse with it, as a vacant soil—open to the cultivation of every adventurer, who shall think fit to cultivate it—a productive, rich field, to which they have a right, equally with the Company, in common parcentage; and hence they set up a loud, undaunted cry, as if it had never been before urged and silenced, against monopoly and usurpation.

You, who are not unacquainted with Parliamentary History, must know, that "MONOPOLY" has been the constant warhoop against the Company, for more than two centuries, so often as the renewal of their Charter has fallen under discussion; and that it has always been put down, as often as it has been raised, by the voice of reason and sober sense. It has gained additional strength of late, by the added vociferation of political speculators, who in an indiscriminate zeal, would confound, without distinction, the Company's peculiar and qualified privileges, in a common condemnation with ordinary monopolies; which are and ever must be odious. This would seem to make it necessary, that I should endeavour to get rid, in limine, of this reproachful and disparaging cry, which, however it may apply to common cases, cannot attach, in my humble apprehension, to the regulated monopoly of the East India Company. This will lead to the consideration, on which I shall but slightly touch, of the History of the Company's Trade.

Taking it for granted that you are informed, as matters of notoriety and history, of the circumstances of

the rise and progress of the British Commercial Inter-course with the East, I shall treat very generally of facts, though I may indulge rather more particularly in apparent inferences from them.

It would seem sufficient to assert, that for nearly two centuries, a state of commerce has been maintained between this country and India, more or less in degree, according to the varying conditions of mercantile adventure from the genius of distinct intermediate eras. The commerce with that distant clime, from its first commencement through all its gradations, has required, from its very nature, a larger capital, than individuals could be expected to furnish, for advancing its requisite ends. At the earliest date, so long ago as the reign of Edward the 6th, we have to notice the association of noblemen, merchants, and manufacturers, for prosecuting a trade with India, through the medium of a joint-stock company: And this it may be said, with a temporary deviation in the time of the protectorate, which was soon abandoned, has been considered as the only safe way in which such a commerce is manageable. The large vessels, suitable to the voyage, the outfit and incidental expences, the value of the cargo, the great intervenient distance between the two countries, the consequent long duration of the different stages of the adventure, the numerous means, domestic as well as foreign, absolutely necessary for conducting it, proved, from the beginning, the impracticability of carrying on the trade on the single capital of individuals.

It was also felt, in the very infancy of the intercourse, from rival nations, (the Portuguese and the Dutch) being already embarked in the same speculation,

and from their having obtained a local establishment, that it would be necessary, in order to keep up a commercial connection with the then newly-discovered world, free from interruption, to establish certain mercantile depôts, and factories, on the coasts of the Indian Seas. These were requisite, as well for the primary purpose of refreshment to our ships, as for giving security and permanency to our commerce, by expediting, through the mediate agency of persons on the spot, the disposal of the outward cargo, and the provision of the homeward returns.

Little time elapsed, from the first settlement of this nature, before it was discovered that further means were essential, in fortifications on shore, and armed vessels afloat, to protect the opening trade, from the selfish arts and practices, and, in many instances, the open and daring attacks of foreign, contending adventurers. It will be unnecessary to recapitulate the various impediments, arising naturally out of the undertaking itself, or opposed by adverse interests, disturbing and hazarding its success, that baffled the early efforts of the first Indian enterprises. The detail would only present a disgusting account of piratical and murderous events, that shock and shame humanity, and could scarcely have been tolerated by any civilized country, if they had not happened at such a distance, as to defeat any immediate control, and if they had not been of such atrociousness, as to be difficult even of belief. It will be enough to remark, that the necessity of such defensive establishments called for an increased capital, and led, as a matter of course, to larger mercantile associations. The nation was not prepared, either from its little regard to commercial pur-

ruits, the advantages of which were not sufficiently understood, or from its naval power, such as it was at this interval, to put forth its arm to protect the growing trade. The discovery of this new source of commercial riches, the prosecution and the defence of it, in all its parts, was, for these reasons, abandoned by the state to the enterprise of associated individuals. At their own cost, their own hazard, and for their own benefit mainly, but relatively for the public good, it was permitted to them, with broader or more confined principles, correspondent with the temper of the times, to institute foreign factories, and to defend them by military out-works.

Local establishments necessarily involved the new settlers, through a community of interests, in the concerns of the neighbouring nations, and more especially of that from which they were allowed a permissive right of habitation; and this communion, operating with other natural causes, had a tendency to engage them in mutual defensive obligations, and subsequently in offensive league, with the surrounding states. These, with other concurring circumstances, connecting themselves with similar establishments, founded by the adventurers of other nations, and the consequences they superinduced, led, in process of time, to institutions of a more warlike and determined character, which changed the pure principle of the original design, and converted it, from a mere commercial speculation, into a political scheme, partaking more of a national character, than of a mercantile transaction. This second and mixed state of Indian commerce required a still further increase of pecuniary resources, fitted to the complex exigencies of the new situation, not only demanding a more extended

capital to supply them, but new concessions on the part of the Government, and renunciations on the part of the Public, to induce reasonable men to proceed on so vast, so fluctuating, and so perilous a plan.

Successive Charters are granted by successive Kings, stamping the persons engaged in this commerce with a perpetual corporate capacity; bestowing on them an exclusive privilege of local trade; arming them with a power to acquire and possess foreign dominions; to erect forts; to raise armies; to make peace and war, so that it affected not Christian Princes; with all the common and distinguishing incidents of sovereignty. These encouragements, that mark the second æra of the Company's history, were given by degrees, within the inclusive reigns of Queen Elizabeth and William the Third, and induced the East India Company to erect factories at almost every convenient place of trade, washed by the Indian seas. The different monarchs recognised in the Charters, from time to time granted by them, the principle of a joint-stock and exclusive trade, as adapted to a commercial intercourse with so distant and so peculiar a country.

The slight change introduced in the reigns of James and Charles, though affecting the original and previously established Company, did not vary materially the principle just asserted; Indian commerce being still treated as an exclusive commerce, from which the nation at large was shut out—although certain favourites were let into the enjoyment of it, by the grace of the respective Sovereigns. The only direct aberration from the principle of exclusion, as before remarked, took place in the time of Cromwell, and a

free trade was, in consequence, indulged and pursued; but this failing in its intended objects and operation, and being found to be practically inconvenient and unwise, was soon after relinquished, when things were restored to their original state; and the Protector, though a favourer of innovation, became, on conviction, the follower and imitator of the policy of his predecessors in power, by granting an exclusive Charter, with extensive and liberal endowments.

All the Princes, within the period in reference, treated the East India Company with especial favour—stimulated them to exertions in the prosecution of their foreign objects—and one of them affected to treat them as sovereigns having a distinct rule, independent of the parent state; refusing to take any cognizance of their acts, or to redress alleged injuries to foreign courts, arising out of them; referring the foreign states to seek their remedy at the immediate hands of the Company.* In addition to this extraordinary mark of royal courtesy and delinquency, the East India Company received a more solid instance of attention from Charles the

* There is a prominent instance of this, at a much later period, which occurred respecting the preliminaries of the Treaty of Paris—and which is noticed by Mr. Macpherson, in his valuable History of European Commerce with India, page 192. To the French Minister's requisition for the restoration of certain territories, taken from the French by the East India Company, the British Minister is stated to have made the following explicit declaration and reply.—

“Respecting those territorial acquisitions the English East India Company have made in Asia, every dispute relative thereto must be settled by that Company, the Crown of England having no right to interfere in what is allowed to be the legal and exclusive property of a Body Corporate belonging to the English nation.”

Second, in the cession and alienation to them, in perpetuity, as absolute lords and proprietors, of the valuable Island of Bombay; a practical comment on the capacity of the Company to enjoy foreign territory, according to the principle of their Charter, by the cession of local sovereigns. This recognition it may be well to keep in mind throughout the observations that I have subsequently to offer.

I have forborne to notice the various and fluctuating fortune, which attended these different stages of the Indian trade—the changes of capital required in the prosecution of it—the occasional interruption it experienced from foreign states, that only served to invigorate its course, and the opposition it intermediately encountered from the British public, which somewhat impeded its march, but finally rendered it more firm and steady. Foreign rivalry, through the powerful medium of joint and consolidated companies, demonstrated the necessity of an organised and embodied resistance—and this, in the progress of things, became so clear and obvious to the meanest judgment, as to countervail the pretences set up, at different intervals, by interested individuals, for altering the course and conduct of the enterprise, by throwing it open to the nation at large.

It has been my endeavour to trace generally the principle and process of Indian commerce, to the period at which it is now arrived, without troubling you with more historical circumstances than are strictly requisite to elucidate my statements, and to sustain the inferences drawn from them. I have not, therefore, delayed you by accounts of the particular profit and loss of the Company at certain periods of their adventure—nor of the

direct and indirect benefit accruing to the nation at large, from the manner in which it was conducted. What I have hitherto had in view, is, to demonstrate, that commerce with India, from the beginning, could not be carried on and maintained, from the inherent nature of it, as well as from the relative state of things, at the time at which it was first attempted, by any other medium than of an exclusive Company: that it was of necessity a monopoly: that any other course of trade, which depended on single efforts and individual caprice, which might be assumed and laid down at pleasure, was not calculated to the object: that at the very outset—it required strong and concentrated means to force the introduction of it:—that it needed a methodised and increasing support in its progress, which neither individual exertions, nor resources, nor humours, were capable of administering:—that these could only be supplied, constantly kept up, and systematically directed, by a large and wealthy association, acting by their Directors, under their joint consent, and not on the particular policy and interests of separate private persons, which, drawing distinct ways, would have induced endless distraction, instead of one great and uniform end: that a variety of statesmen had recognised, from time to time, the principle of exclusive trade, as applicable to our intercourse with India, and as indispensable to the management of it:—that successive Kings, acting on their counsel, had favoured the principle recommended; and in furtherance of the policy which it dictates, had condescended, even to delegate their principal prerogatives, and suffered them, without jealousy, to be exercised (a strange and novel experiment) by a subject-body: that such prerogatives were at all times

considered necessary to be communicated for the successful issue of the adventure, and, demanding an entirety in the use, could not have been placed in the hands of separate parties, however respectable, they might have been, without producing as changeable a rule, as there were persons to exercise it: that there was no reason to repent of the principle at first laid down, for the government of the Indian Trade—nor was there any deviation from it, except in a particular instance, and for a short space, and in an innovating age: and such temporary and occasional departure, so far from lessening the authority of the principle acted on, confirmed, by its miserable success, or, rather, by its utter failure, the superiority, if not the sole fitness, of the policy, originally adopted, to the administration of our affairs with the East.

The first trade to India was carried on, as it has been shewn, by the means of a monopoly; depending on the will and authority of the crown. Neither the country, nor the crown itself, except perhaps in private presents and gratuities, and those of no great amount, derived any pecuniary compensation, within the periods described, for the *abandonment*, if the expression be warrantable, of our Indian Commerce to an exclusive company. There was nothing in point of fact to abandon. The foundation of trade was to be laid; to be built upon, as opportunities offered; and to be finally established by resources and exertions, that could only be afforded by an extensive body of men. The nation at large could not expect to find more advantage from this, than any other species of commerce, prosecuted from its shores, and it did not certainly derive less. Even in the earliest

days the Indian Trade was made subservient to the general interests of the country, by affording a vent for several exportable staple articles,* and an opportunity for the importation of others of the most vital political importance.†

In proportion as the trade opened itself, it, in the same degree, demanded fresh energies and increasing capital; not productive, in the usual routine of commerce, but to be laid out, to a large amount, in dead, or slowly-yielding stock—in purchasing and providing the facilities, nay even the indispensable necessities, the instruments, the very implements, as it were, in factories and forts, for sustaining its first footing and gradual progress. This capital was eagerly furnished, and in a way most advantageous to the country. It was not taken from one branch of commerce to be diverted to another—by the successful use of which little could possibly be added to the stock of the whole; but it was more than half subscribed by persons, who, from station, profession, and sex, could not personally engage in trade; and, strange as it appears, by the subjects of other powers; all and every one of these, however foreign their habits and their relations, were made to assist in the success of an enterprize, purely national, and exclusively British. At the present hour, the funds, on which this trade is carried on, bear this originally distinctive feature.

The successful application of these funds, to the nurture of our Indian Trade, had advanced and matured it, at the instant contemplated; so that it had gained an introduction every where, where it might be thought de-

* Woollens and Metals. † Salt-petre, &c.

sirable to introduce it—so wide and expanded an establishment, with so multifarious and so large an expenditure attached to it—that it became an imperious matter of prudence, with those embarked in the adventure, whether it should be pursued, to its possible extent on the precarious tenure by which it was then held. The magnitude of the capital employed, with well-grounded doubts of the efficacy of the Royal Charter, for securing and continuing the future advantages of exclusive trade, which began now to be generally expressed, made the East India Company desirous of obtaining the consent of Parliament, in confirmation of their preexisting charter; which promised, when obtained, to put their possession on a more safe and lasting foundation, and to create a third grand and coveted era in their constitution.

The first Parliamentary sanction of the Company's privileges occurred shortly after the Revolution; and whatever stability or other advantages it might be supposed to realise to the Company, it had undoubtedly the effect, from that time to the present, of keeping it under constant parliamentary controul, and under perpetual contribution.

I shall pass over the short history of the new and rival Company, created by the 9th and 10th of William the III. on the consideration of a public loan of two millions of money—the failure of its objects—and the great national, as well as private mischief produced by it; which

* This was occasioned by excessive exportations of Bullion and Merchandise; the latter of which, owing to the glut of the Market, could not find purchasers abroad—and was exported in great quantities of Indian Manufactures—to the ruin of several Artisans and Manufacturers.—The act constituting the new Company, passed towards the

the Legislature, that had occasioned it, was almost, on the instant, supplicated to remedy, and which ended in bringing back the commerce into its first and simple channel, by leading, in a sense of mutual advantage, to the incorporation of the old and new Company, at the beginning of the reign of Queen Anne; which Company, so united, has continued ever since, by virtue of repeated Charters, and various Acts of Parliament, to carry on the exclusive Commerce to the eastward of the Cape of Good Hope.

It would be beyond the present purpose to go into an enumeration of the particular times, at which the exclusive privileges of the United Company have been confirmed, by Charter and Acts of Parliament, from the time of Queen Anne to the present reign; or the sums of money that have been absolutely given, or temporarily lent to the country at a small rate of interest, or without interest at all, in consideration of the renewal of them; or to trace, with any minute care, the relinquishment, on the part of the Company, of direct claims on the country, or the advantages rendered by it, by the sacrifice of the Company's interests, under parliamentary stipulations, to the paramount interests of the State. It would seem sufficient to shew, that within the present reign only, the Company has contributed to the exigencies of the State, either in cash payments, or contributions scarcely less direct, the large aggregate amount of 5,135,319.*

end of the Session 1696—and was repealed in the spring of 1706, by the 11th and 12th of William the III^d.

*See the printed paper (No. 17) submitted by the Court of Directors to the President of the Board of Control, Appendix D, Page 57, of the papers respecting the negotiation, &c. Black and Parry.

Within the interval, immediately noticed, the Charter was confirmed by express Act of Parliament, not less than three times ; and on every occasion of renewal, the privileges of the Company have undergone an exact and severe investigation. It were impossible that any more close scrutiny could be had into the merits of any system, both in regard to principle, operation, and effects, than was instituted in the years 1783-4, and afterwards in the year 1793, with respect to the Indian system, as then in application to the administration of our eastern affairs.

The Indian Bills of Mr. Fox and Mr. Pitt are fresh in recollection, and tend, in their memorable result, to prove, that however the two great authors of them might differ on other points, they entertained one and the same opinion, as evidenced by their respective bills, that a regulated monopoly, as established through the instrumentality of the East India Company, is alone suited to our Eastern Commerce. These enlightened and rival statesmen had not to form a judgment on hasty or visionary data, but on experimental grounds, from the view of a large and discovered principle, in its broad and direct use, for a long series of years. However distinct and wide from each other, the notions of these eminent politicians might be, on the capacity of the Executive Body of the East India Company, for the discharge of the delegated functions of sovereignty, with due effect to the subjects placed under its guardianship and government, they neither of them doubted its competency for maintaining the Commercial relations created by Charter, and confirmatory acts of the legislature ; much less doubted they the wisdom, policy, or justice, on which the exclusive privileges, favoured by the crown

and the legislature, were at first conferred, and ultimately secured. They perceived, as every discerning eye must see, the necessity, in the first stage of the British Indian intercourse, for united capital and united efforts, to fight and combat against the intrigue and force of commercial adversaries in the territory, the seat of the intended enterprise: nor could they fail to observe, what more extended and more conjoint aids would be required, in a farther advanced stage, for securing the footing which should be adversely won from the opponents of the adventure. Every Parliamentary provision, made in the progressive advance of the trade, during the third æra, the Company and the Public could not but contemplate as an approbation, on mature reflection and experience, of the principle on which the trade was conducted, and of its adequacy to its end.

The virtue of the Parliamentary sanction was seen in its immediate effects, now observable to all. It had given the authority of the state to the grant of the Crown—it had bestowed a seeming permanency on the grant, by the frequent renewal of it, and had sanctioned the exercise of the rights which it conveyed by numberless formal recognitions. Under the faith and encouragement of these acts the Company enlarged their views; they contented not themselves with a mere bidding place, but surrounded it with a circumjacent domain; purchased or ceded out of grace by the local proprietors. A fixed interest in the soil entailed on the Company, not only the defence of their own territorial possessions, but called on them to contribute to the aid of the Princes, from whom they derived their lands. The latter service obtained new cessions: these increasing in value and con-

sequence, began to demand protection, and hence followed the erection of fortresses, and the constitution of regular troops. The growing importance of the Company's territorial establishments inflamed the enmity of foreign colonists and settlers, and more especially of the French. As the latter could not make, from national considerations, direct and open war upon the English, in these their foreign possessions, they contrived, by busy intrigue, to stir up animosities, or excite pretensions in the neighbouring Potentates, that could not fail to engage the rival European Adventurers on distinct sides of the controversy to which they were calculated to lead. The fruit or effect of this policy disappointed the views of those who conceived it. Though it served to plunge the Company in unbounded temporary expense, and diverted their capital from the purposes of trade, it tended to increase their influence, by direct territorial acquisitions, and to raise their credit by an impression, which it afforded an opportunity of making, of their constancy and courage. Local strife and warfare induced local alliances — and their natural consequences were a partition of spoil and of conquest. These called forth, in time, constant military establishments and large standing armies; partaking, as circumstances demanded, of a mixed nature and form, Asiatic, as well as European; the former, from the numbers nearer hand, being, at all times, the main ingredient of which the armies were composed. The military ardour and spirit of the British soldiery communicated a part of its character to the native troops embodied with them in the same ranks; and, by their joint and well-directed force, the Company succeeded in a variety of struggles, which it is not necessary to specify, against foreign European

powers, in conjunction with native states, both in indirect hostility, and in open and legitimate contest, distinguished by all the features of public and national warfare. In none of these conflicts, numerous as they were, had the Company recourse to the parent state, either for pecuniary resources, or for military succour, save in the form of a stipendiary or subsidised assistance, and *that*, considering the scope of their own military establishments, to a comparatively small extent. In some late instances, at the meridian of the Company's power, they have themselves returned the partial boon which they had received, not only with interest, but with generosity unparalleled and unrequited,* in contributing with their proper and peculiar force, to the pure enterprises of the state, in defeating the ambitious purposes of the national enemy, and reducing or destroying his possessions.

Passing lightly over the annals of the East India Company, from the date of the Parliamentary confirmation of its privileges, as well as the acts that have rendered them distinguished, I would direct your consideration to the effects alone, to which it led.

It had the immediate tendency of encouraging the East India Company, under the prospect of a more regular and continued possession, to step beyond the boundaries ascribed to their factories, and, in a favourable turn of circumstances, to exceed the narrow confines

* The expedition to Egypt is in proof of this, as is also the reduction of the French, and Dutch, and Danish settlements on the Revénue: the capture of Ceylon, and the Dutch settlements, particularly Java and its dependencies, to the westward, and Mauritius and Bourbon, the last possessions of France, and her allies to the east of the Cape. The expenses of the captures are not yet fully paid to the Company, and some of them, with shame be it mentioned, are unhandsoomely and ungenerously disputed.

of trade, to found an empire of its own ; containing within it not only the first and necessary means, but presenting the very field and source of commerce itself. It had changed a mere casual domicile, into a fixed and established dominion : it had converted a permissive trade into an absolute independent commerce. By making it an end, instead of a mean, it had reduced commerce, which was a principal, into the quality of an accessory, or subordinate incident or consequence. In the course of this remarkable and unavoidable revolution, the agents or instruments were raised, as well as the ends themselves. Instead of private, undistinguished adventurers, prosecuting their simple, mercantile speculation, within a circumscribed limit ; with a few straggling ships afloat ; with a handful of civil servants on shore ; and with a restricted purse ; we have to witness the elevation of the East India Company to the proud rank of sovereigns ; the conversion of their scanty shipping, into a powerful fleet, giving direct employment to 8000 seamen, and about 1400 Commanders and Officers ; the constitution of a mere compting-house appendage into three extensive establishments of enlightened civil servants ; a military force, locally created, vying almost in strength and numbers with our national armies ; a Territory, reduced into quiet and peaceable possession, more than co-extensive with the Mother Country, with a population, quadruple in number to the subjects of the parent state ; with a Revenue of fifteen millions annually ; with a capital, or credit, actually avail-

* The Company's armies at the three principal presidencies constitute a body of 140,000 men, commanded by upwards of 3000 European officers.

able, and employed on these grand and commanding objects, exceeding fifty-one millions sterling.*

These are the plain, direct, and discernible results to the East India Company itself, from the exercise of the exclusive privileges permitted to it ; nor is the beneficial effect to the state less essential, though, probably, not so striking or apparent.

The state has had the good fortune to reap, almost in direct contribution, during the existing reign only, above five millions of money.† It has a security for participating, according to legislative provision, after the Indian territorial, and other authorised debts are discharged, and the moderate legal interest on the Company's capital defrayed, more largely even than the Company itself, in the surplus revenue of its territories. So that, if in future times, more income shall be collected than is sufficient for the exigencies explained, it will go not into the coffers of the Company, but into the public treasury. In the mean time, it has substantially and solidly profited, in the export of the staple articles and the manufactures of the country, to the amount of more than one million per annum ;‡ and in

* How this capital is employed, and of what it consists, is distinctly stated in the Papers printed for the information of the proprietors of East India stock. Vide, *Papers Respecting the Negotiation, &c.* pages 55, 56. The amount specifically devoted to the Indian and China trade, is not less than 21,000,000l. See Page 114 of the same Papers.

† The actual amount of contributions from the East India Company to Government, between the years 1768 to 1811, was 5,135,319l. Vide, *Papers respecting the Negotiation, page 57.*

‡ The average export of woollens, (always a losing trade) is 1,139,942l. All other export articles together, do not exceed the annual average value of 863,232l. See Page 126 of the Supplement to the 4th Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons.

the imports of foreign produce, in customs and excise, omitting smaller considerations, it has received from the Company's hands more than four millions sterling annually.* The country at this moment possesses three regiments of well disciplined troops, maintained entirely at the expense of the Company, for its internal defence; and several thousands† of the British population, more easily conjectured than to be computed, are constantly kept and employed in the domestic establishments of the Company, or from the influence and demands of its trade, not only from being burthensome to the state, but are rendered instrumental to its good.

If such the origin and effects of the exclusive privileges of the East India Company, it is not to be wondered that statesmen, like Mr. Fox or Mr. Pitt, though bold enough in their political conceptions, should not venture to trench upon them, so as to affect the one or the other materially. It is left for other times to demand another policy; and for other statesmen to meditate a change in our established Indian relations.

With what justice the popular outcry is raised against the East India Company's monopoly, as it is called, and with what reason it is seemingly regarded by the present race of statesmen, may be learnt from the brief preceding account of the history of the affairs of the East India Company. What is there, it may be asked, in the Company's exclusive privileges, as explained, that should subject them to the same common odium, in which common monopolies are wont to be holden?

* The duties in customs and excise amounted in the year, ending in January 1811, to 4,213,425*l*. See Page 57 of the Papers respecting the Negotiation, &c. &c.

† These are stated, in a moderate estimate, at 30,000 persons.

Were the Company's privileges, in their foundation, or present expanse, granted as a boon from the crown, at the expense of the nation at large? This I take to be the leading circumstance, exciting hatred against monopolies in general. Is this feature to be found in the exclusive privileges of the Company? Did the crown take anything valuable from the common possession, to throw it with a lavish bounty into the lap of the East India Company? This has never even been asserted. What, in point of fact, had the crown to give? A naked right to trade with a scarcely discovered world---a bare permission to seek a commercial footing, by its own device, in a strange land. If the mercantile body of the community be restrained from competition in the new adventure, and has ever since been restrained, it is out of the ordinary care of the state towards its common members, in exercising a discretion belonging to it, in controlling all public acts, which may interfere with the public interests. The trade of the state, as all other its concerns, is alike submitted to the government of the state. It must be regarded, not as it may simply affect the commercial part of the community, but as it may touch the great body of the nation. If the latter interest require that the trade be conducted by a part of the mercantile body, instead of the whole, the less must be given up to the greater interest, the society of merchants, to the society at large. But what is fit, at one season, in consultation of the general good, may, under other circumstances and times, be directly opposite. It might be right, at first, to conduct the Indian trade upon an exclusive principle, but after it had obtained a certain stability and maturity, it might be thought wise to alter the course and manner of it. This,

however, would be the care of succeeding governments, as times or circumstances should appear to be ripe for the alteration: and if no change has been introduced, the necessity of it, it may be supposed, has not hitherto been apparent. But as it was the duty of preceding periods to take care for themselves, so it may be deemed to be the duty of the present day, to guard its own peculiar interests; and in the exercise of this office, it is the fashion of the passing hour to condemn, not only the universal principle of monopoly, as applicable to general trade, but the modified and regulated application of the principle to the exclusive and long approved Commerce of the East India Company.

I have already shewn, that the strong feature which pervades monopolies generally, disfiguring and rendering them repulsive, is not to be found on the face of the Company's qualified monopoly. It will be my endeavour to shew, in a few words, that it differs as much in its ordinary, as it does in its primary and distinguishing feature.

It is the property of monopoly to act on a pure selfish principle—to acquire for itself—keep all things to itself—to suffer no participation. Now, from the first to the last, in every intermediate stage, the public has been constituted, if not a nominal, a real and substantial partner, not in the losses indeed, but in all the benefits, be they what they might, of the Company's commercial proceedings. Not a ship has traversed the Indian seas, at any period of the adventure, but some price has been paid by the Company, either in the shape of compulsory exports, or stipulated returns, or in hand gold, for the license or privilege of sailing. The full gain of any adventure has not been permitted to flow in a natural

direction, into the pockets of the East India Company, but has been impounded, as it were, beyond a limited amount, in the hands of the Company's executive, and subjected to the controul and will of the state. The Company, from the very outfit of its trade, has not been permitted to draw to the extent of the present and immediate profits deducible from it, but has been obliged to apply the mesne produce to increase the capital of trade, or to enlarge or fortify the sphere of it. All its extra accumulations in commerce have in this way been exhausted and applied, in the purchase, improvement, and defence of its territorial possessions, to many times the amount of the productive commercial capital. Even large sums, equal to a national revenue, have been borrowed and added to such gains, to eke out what was wanting to complete this *necessary* work ;* which was to rescue our Eastern commerce from a state of uncertain dependence on foreign powers, and place it on the sure basis of independent absolute tenure ; to change an unreduced right, held in common with every people on the face of the universe, into an unqualified and private possession. In the annexation, even of the extensive territorial possessions, which are now added to, and indeed form the very foundation on which our Eastern commerce is erected, the state has contrived to render them as well as the commerce itself, contributable beyond a certain bound to the services of the community. The Company, instead of pursuing a monopoly, then, as it is

* It must not be presumed from this expression, that the Company always considered the extension of territory as necessary, or desirable ; for they have often, formally and sincerely protested against it, in opposition to the policy and acts of their local Governments. It is not requisite to enquire whether the Company or the Governments were right in all, or any particular instance.

improperly termed, has been following a joint adventure, in which the nation has at all times shared the benefit, without being at any time liable to loss: or, rather, the Company has been the instrument or agent for carrying on a lucrative commerce for the public, without any capital of the public at risk, and without any trouble of management. Where then is the sense and signification in the cry of monopoly, as respects the East India Company? If there be any establishment more strictly free from the demerits of a common monopoly, it is the very establishment under-contemplation. In any view, the most unfavourable for the Company, in which it can be taken, it is a purchased privilege at a given price, fixed by the legislature. The Company has not been indulged with any gratuity whatever, at the expense of the public. The latter, surely, cannot let out the soil for hire, and set up a pretence to cultivate it on its own account.

But it may be said, that the country has not made a conveyance of the Indian trade to the Company, in perpetuity, but solely for a term of years: that such term is now on the eve of expiration, when the leased rights will revert to the public, to be again let out or holden, at the public discretion, in its own hands.

There can be no doubt, it is presumed, of the authority of the state to renew its own grant; though abundant doubts may be rationally entertained of the prudence, under existing circumstances, of such a resumption. It will not be forgotten, in considering the propriety of renewing or resuming the grant, what has been collaterally and lawfully acquired by the Company in the interim, independent of the more exclusive right of

trade. In pursuing the latter, the Company has availed itself of a distinct capacity, not only co-extensive with the term of the grant of the exclusive privilege of trade, but a perpetual capacity, unlimited in extent, and unfettered in the enjoyment, of purchasing and acquiring lands. In the lawful exercise of this capacity, it has actually possessed itself of vast and valuable provinces and principalities, in which the most desirable branches of the Indian trade are cultivated, and are capable almost exclusively of cultivation : these stretch along the whole range of the sea-coast, from the Ganges, through all the intermediate territory, with one solitary exception, to the Persian Gulph, running in a transverse direction many hundred miles into the interior of the Indian Peninsula.

Besides the capacity to take and enjoy lands, the Company has a further privilege, equally as large and unbounded, of a corporate character, also, to prosecute its commercial speculations on a joint stock capital and in an aggregate body. The actual possession of these rights, of an indissoluble nature, separable and divisible from the right of the mere exclusive privilege of trade, which is temporary only ; which may be exercised by the Company, whether the latter privilege be continued or withheld, and which, if exercised, must make an open trade of less relative value ; is a circumstance that must force itself on the notice of the legislature, if it have not a direct influence on its deliberation, when it comes to the consideration of the policy of annulling, or extending the Company's Charter.

It will not be, as at first, a question, whether the instrumentality of a regulated Company, or an open

competition, be best adapted to the maintenance of a commercial intercourse with India. Things have undergone an entire and radical change since that question arose. There is not now, as then, a new commerce to establish. The trade is in a mature state, and incapable, in the most sanguine minds, of much, if any addition. It is in the possession, principally, in the *proprietary* possession of persons, not to be thence wrested, unless by a species of violence, who first prosecuted and have invariably cultivated it; whose efforts have created, and made it what it is.

The Indian trade, then, cannot be resigned, it may be said, into the hands of the public, as it was originally leased out. It was delivered as a whole, but with a privilege to the Company, confirmed from time to time, to appropriate *that*, which must necessarily tend in its consequences, to the appropriation of more* or less, as it might be found convenient, of the commerce; i. e. the thing granted, inasmuch as it should depend, as undoubtedly it does, on local or territorial sovereignty. Not only the privilege itself, but all the instruments and facilities to the enjoyment of it were granted, to push the privilege to its greatest possible extent. Territories, new sources of revenue and of trade, have in consequence been conquered and appropriated, under the eye and approbation of the governing power of the state, and with the means, standing armies and sovereign authority, placed, wisely or otherwise, need not now be examined, but actually placed in the hands of the Company. These territorial acquisitions, as it has been before observed, have exhausted, either directly, or in their consequence, the greater part of the commercial profits of the East India

Company, and have engaged their credit to an almost incredible amount, in the hope of rendering them, in the probable and natural event of things, so many certain, if not new provinces of commerce, to be an ultimate reward to their exertions, in any adverse conclusion being put to their exclusive trade. In any other consideration, than that these were an absolute intangible property, in any and all events, it would be impossible to account for, or justify the proceedings of the Company, on the ground of prudence or common sense.

In the letter and spirit of the Company's Charters, and the statutes affording them their sanction, the right of acquiring and possessing territory, and of holding it in perpetual enjoyment, is written in too clear a character to be susceptible of misconception. If they were not intelligible in themselves, the conduct and acts of all parties concerned, are decisively in favour of the construction immediately stated. The Company in every territorial acquisition, whether obtained by conquest or cession, from any of the Asiatic unchristian princes, against and with whom the unlimited power of making war and peace is delegated by the crown to the Company, has invariably assumed to itself the conquered or ceded countries, ~~with~~ any qualification whatever; whether acquired by the sole instrumentality of its own armies, or in union or conjunction with the King's forces. No participation has been claimed at any time, either on behalf of the crown or the people, in a single appropriation of this nature. The crown has not reserved to itself even a right of interference, in no other case abandoned, in the distribution of transitory property, in spoil or capture from the enemy, to the reward of its

own military retainers : nor has it laid claim to one sign of superiority, however small, over the native people, that have passed, with the territory, under the government of the East India Company. Over these, as over the territory itself, the Company have been left in the entire and unqualified sovereignty, and have exercised it without question or interruption, and have in consequence involved itself in all the wide and multiplied expenditure, attendant on the military and civil establishments, adapted to the sovereignty over a great people. It would seem impossible to disconnect the idea of permanency from rights, and the undisputed and undisturbed exercise of them, such as those I have just described ; for it would be necessary only to advert to the effects that must spring from an opposite consideration of them, in the changes and accidents to which they would perpetually give rise, to discountenance a supposition that they could ever have been intended for a transient or temporary use.

There are those who might contend, in contemplating the privileges granted by the crown, and sanctioned by legislative enactments ; the unrestrained use and enjoyment of them ; the events to which they have led ; the important consequences which they have induced ; the faith that they have inspired in the Company ; the resulting responsibilities they have involved ; the great relative and reciprocal obligations and duties they have raised, both as regards the Company, and unnumbered millions of native subjects : there are those, I repeat, who might argue for the indefeasibility of rights, which, if dissolved, or dissoluble, might throw so many, so important, and such conflicting interests into uncertainty

and confusion. I have not been led, however, into the general observations just offered, to lay the foundation for an argument of this extent. I do not mean to question here, or any where, the omnipotence of Parliament to annul those powers, which it has itself served in some sort to create, or to deny or withhold the means by which alone they can be hereafter retained. I know too well how much the interests of the Company, and the general interests of the state are intermixed and depend upon one another, to contemplate any separation but on a good understanding, if not in mutual consent. But I have dwelt more on this particular subject, than I might otherwise have been disposed to do, from the undisguised pretensions of the public, every where avowed, under the ill-directed notions of the day, to leap at once into the inmost recesses of the Company's possessions, and into a common and unceremonious participation of those advantages, which have been produced and maintained by its private exertions, and its proper means. As if at the termination of the Company's Charter (could a notion so wild and extravagant enter into the head of any sober or reflecting being ?) the whole community, the sum and total of the English population, the rabble many, and the refined few, for all or none succeed to the contemplated vacant possession, should be indiscriminately let loose, without any preliminary provision, or precautionary measure, on the wide regions of Asia; to affright the natives in their homes; to beard the Company in their dominion; to disturb them in their possessions; to elbow them in their pursuits; and to dispute and contend with them for the ground on which they stand. There is no politician, however wild his

scheme of Indian policy, however jealous of the Company's privileges, and of the rights reverting to the public on the expiration of the charter, that can entertain a serious thought of turning adrift on the plains of India, so many of the British population as shall chuse to go thither; or can have any other than one opinion of so monstrous a proposition. Yet the advocates for a free trade insist on the proposal in its most comprehensive compass.

But, though I do not contend, for it is not necessary to contend, for the absolute right of the Company in their territorial possessions, I yet consider that they have acquired such a clear and equitable interest in them, by permissive appropriation, long tenure, maintenance and preservation, as to bar the entrance of the public, under any pretence which the ordinary rule of justice, or the dictate of legitimate policy, can tend to favour. It would be much easier, I should conceive, to maintain the highest possible sense of property in such possessions, as the most strenuous advocates of the Company's rights seem to entertain, than to argue in support of so outrageous a supposition, that the British populace, as of mere right, without any preliminary consent, or compromise, may force themselves, on the determination of the charter, into the Company's Indian possessions; converting, with the trade itself, the local seat of it to their own use. There are visionaries, I am aware, in policy, as well as commerce, who make common league and war, under their respective excitements, against the unfortunate East India Company; producing a sort of compound hostility, that savours more of the rancorous quality of a private feud, than of public and generous

warfare ; but, to whatever degree of hostility the personal feelings and resentments of individuals may have carried them, I have never heard that they have so far misled them, as to make them wholly blind to the claims of the Company on the public consideration ; although the nature and extent of those claims may be variously estimated.

Much of the odium directed against the East India Company originates in a misconceived notion of their character, as supposed monopolists, in the vulgar acceptance of the term. This presumes, that they have taken and retained to themselves, under an undue preference, what of right belongs to the general stock ; and this circumstance has had the natural effect, during the operation of the delusion, of arming all persons against the Company, who shall imagine themselves injured by the supposed usurpation of their rights. No common pains have been taken to spread the impression, and stir the jealousy of the public mind. But the latter must cease, as the true situation of the East India Company shall become known.

I have shewn, and I hope satisfactorily, that the charge of monopoly, in the common sense and understanding of the word, is not imputable to the East India Company ; that, although the privilege of exclusive trade has been granted to them, it has not been awarded on any principle of favouritism, but out of a particular policy, which has been supposed by the constituted authorities, and the representatives of the people, to be alone applicable to our Eastern Commerce : that such policy has not been acted on, without respect to the public interests ; that these have been attended to in as direct a manner, as was

consistent with the views of such policy ; that in practice or effect, the policy has been productive of the benefits generally expected of it, though it may have disappointed and defeated the views of a certain class of subjects, who, looking only to their own interest, contradistinguished from the Company's, may have lost sight of the larger object, the public weal, which stands on a principle distinct from either, though reconcilable, in fact, with the good of both. Whatever the differences of the opposed parties may be, whatever remedies they are capable of, and whatever consequences they may induce, it will not be forgotten in the Parliamentary discussion, now fast approaching, in considering the merits of each, that there is a third party to be regarded, more interesting than the other two. Much is to be reconciled between the great body of the Merchants and Manufacturers of the United Kingdom and the East India Company, but more between these two warring and conflicting interests, and the country at large.

It will be for Parliament in its general wisdom, and general controul, to interpose in, and moderate these adverse pretensions. It is already called upon by the East India Company, to determine its future functions and the character it shall bear in the administration of our Eastern Affairs. It will be for Parliament to decide, whether the whole system of our Indian Government shall be recast, for the sake of favouring a speculative policy, or whether it shall be retained in its primitive shape and spirit, with such easy, practical alterations as may be found necessary, from the change of times and circumstances.

The Company have at least a title of long undisturbed possession, and of repeated recognition ; a ground, tenable

against all claimants, who cannot discover a better title. Before it can be dispossessed of what it holds, it will be incumbent on those, who wish to oust the Company from its possessory rights, to shew a preferable title. They must succeed; too, if they ever do succeed, by the strength of their own claims, not by the slander of the Company's pretensions. It will be in vain for them to aim at the delusion of the House of Commons, by exhausting all the arguments, that speculative minds have raised against monopolies, their unfavourable bearing on public improvements, and their unfitness, compared with individual exertions, to the due extension of commerce. The answers to these objections may be found, not only in the peculiarity of the Company's monopoly, the particular nature of its objects, and the limited extent of it, but in the sanction it has received from the approbation of so many authorities, and from the test of long experiment.

If, however, the arguments against the Company's exclusive trade presented themselves for the first time, they are not so authoritative as to repel all question. It may be true, that the country would derive greater benefit from the pursuit of an open, ordinary commerce, by the exertion of the whole community, in separate and individual enterprise, than by the industry of any given number of persons in a joint capacity. It may be true, that the very nature of joint trade excludes the idea of that thrift and oeconomy, which is practised by single adventurers; and that it holds not out that constant stimulus, in the shape of sole and direct profits, to the furtherance of every separate mercantile scheme. That it may be hence expected, that an individual will be more active and inquisitive, a Company more indolent and careless; that the one will create mercantile objects;

while the other may neglect those which are present to their hands. But giving due weight to every one of these suggestions, they decide nothing in the instance to which they are applied.

The Indian trade, from the first moment it was pursued, to the present hour, could not be considered as an ordinary trade, nor could it be followed in the ordinary course. Obstacles were opposed to it, both at the beginning, and in its whole progress, that called for more general exertions and for larger capital than individuals could supply. The trade, even at its maturity, is of a limited and delicate kind; and though it might possibly have been enlarged by the commercial zeal and enterprize of individuals, it also might have been endangered by the same means. Eagerness and excess of zeal might have crushed a commerce, in its birth, which is admitted on all sides to be of a puny and curious texture. The trade of India, like all great undertakings, depended for success, on a regular and orderly prosecution of it, not on a sudden and instantaneous impulse; more on perseverance, than immediate force. Individual zeal, directed by individual interest, and acting on its own principle, looks only to its own good, is abated by every disappointment, and overwhelmed by the defeat of its adventure: let it be ever so prosperous, it aims but at a single object—it begins and ends with itself. The views, on the contrary, of an united body of Merchants, such as the East India Company, are more large and combined—the spirit which is called into exercise is of the same kind; it is not to be raised or disconcerted by any one event, for it pursues its ends, not by fits and starts, but by organised and systematic means; in its success it is not elated into extraordinary speculations;

in adversity, as its losses are divisible and shared, it falls not into despondence or despair ; it looks not for immediate, but ultimate gain ; and therefore does not anticipate it, on any single necessity or occasion, but patiently awaits it as a conclusion of the whole. If one would seem to be more active, the other is more patient and enduring ; if one be more adventurous, the other is more secure. If the one may achieve more individual gain—the other, it may be inferred, from the stability of its undertakings, may more promote the interests and the service of the state.

Not wishing to dwell on the obvious advantages, which a Joint Stock Company must possess, over insulated adventurers, in a slow and distant trade, requiring a large capital, and growing expense, I shall labour not to establish a position, which would seem sufficiently self-evident ; that if the East India Company has some disqualifying properties inherent in its constitution, in common with other joint companies, for prosecuting the trade with India, it has at least some qualifications of its own, that have tended to facilitate our early commercial intercourse with that country ; have maintained and preserved it in its progress, and have brought it to its present perfection, whatever that may be. It has presumption and prescription in its favour, and is not to be defeated by opposite presumptions, carrying with them neither age, experience, nor authority.

They who seek the overthrow of the Company's privileges, must prove, that they do not answer the ends for which they were granted ; or that those ends would be more largely advanced by a different disposition of things ; or, in other words, that the interests of the

country are not consulted, as originally intended, in the mode of carrying on the commerce with India, through the medium of the Company ; but would be beneficially increased, by throwing open the doors of the trade to the general body of its merchants.

The first, or negative position need not be examined. It is from its nature incapable of proof. If the latter or affirmative proposition be established, it would seem necessarily to include what is predicated in the first. If the trade to India be capable of increase, in any considerable degree, so as to render it important in a national point of view, by the admission of the mercantile community to the participation of it, it would seem to follow, that the interests of the country are not served, as suggested, by suffering the trade to remain exclusively in the hands of the East India Company. There are, however, other great and leading considerations, involved in the proposition, that I have touched upon elsewhere, which are not to be overlooked, but which I wish not to repeat, being anxious to proceed to the examination of the question, whether the public interests are likely to be increased and sustained, as it is asserted, by an open and indiscriminate, instead of a restricted and regulated trade.

It will be the business of those, who wish to drive the Company from its possessions, to shew to the conviction of the House of Commons, ere it can sanction any material innovation, that the British Asiatic dominions may be made more useful and profitable to the parent state, than under the exclusive Government, political as well as commercial, but more especially the latter, of the East India Company. It is theirs to prove, an indispensable task, that our eastern commerce is now depressed,

in the hands and management of the Company ; that it admits of extension, and would be extended on other principles of management : that the great body of our manufacturers and merchants would be benefited, and the public revenue consequently augmented, proportionately with the success of their efforts, in extending the scope of trade.

I am free to confess, that if the opposers of the Company's charter should succeed in establishing these various grounds, there could be no serious denial of the right, respecting still the Company's separate acquirements, for which they principally and strenuously contend. But as the consequence would be so serious to the Company, and the country itself, the conclusions insisted on will be investigated, in all their relations, as thoroughly as the facts and premises from which they are supposed to be deducible. All the stale arguments against monopolies—all the novel speculations arising out of loose, undefined principles—the laws and maxims of general political economy, will be regarded only, as they shall be found to adapt themselves to the object, on which they are supposed to bear. They may be truisms in general application, but unfounded and fallacious in reference to the particular case.

The commerce with India, say they who are advocates for a free trade, is fruitful and inexhaustible in its objects, and immeasurable in extent. It affords a wide field for the exportation of our manufactures, a most valuable and never-failing return of native local produce, and the exchangeable works of art, which would lead, if properly managed, to the encouragement of our mechanics and artisans, in the sale of their superabundant store, and in the supply of materials for fresh and future labour—a

consequent employment for the capital and exertion of our merchants, with all the resulting national benefits following and flowing in natural course : that this commerce, if rightly understood, has not been adequately maintained by the East India Company ; that neither its capacity, capital, nor constitution, is calculated to embrace a commerce of such variety and magnitude ; that it has, therefore, been neglected, or not sufficiently cultivated, and suffered to remain a waste, even at a season of unparalleled commercial distress ; when our manufacturers and merchants are drooping and decaying for the want of opportunities of exercising their particular callings.

The latter melancholy circumstance has had an undue operation, it is to be feared, on the public mind, in its view of our existing eastern commerce. The temporary sufferings of the manufacturing and mercantile interests, appear to have excited a jealousy against a branch of commerce, which is least of all affected by the causes, that have diminished for a while our other mercantile outlets and resources ; and to have given an importance, an ideal, not a real consequence to it, which never has, and never can belong to it. Hence it has been heightened in a fanciful degree, to the eyes of those, who covet, and sunk, in the same proportion, and under the same influence, in the hand which possesses it.

The truth is, as is shewn by the well known and authenticated history of British Indian commerce, that, with however an extensive track of country it is maintained, and with however numerous a population it communicates, it has been of secondary or little value, as a trade of export ; in which quality it is particularly

respected, in the extraordinary notions, now entertained of it. *

The Indian trade, in its incipient state, was almost entirely carried on by the medium of bullion, which is no inconsiderable ingredient in its support, in its present more perfect condition. By the subsequent care and policy of the Legislature, by the correspondent attention of the East India Company, and, moreover, by the favourable form of its constitution, that could submit to such a sacrifice, the naturally limited outward commerce has been extended, at the sole expence of the Company,

* The fact is established, beyond all controversy, in the genuine history of Indian commerce; submitted by the Select Committee of the Court of Directors, and annexed to the Supplement to the Fourth Report of the Committee of the House of Commons, on the Affairs of the East India Company. The Report abundantly shews,

“ That India, under Asiatic Sovereigns, never had any capital of its own, applicable to European commerce.”

“ That the native inhabitants never had any genius or inclination for distant enterprises.”

“ That the manufactures, in European demand, were set on foot, at our first intercourse with India, by money exported from Europe.”

“ That, from the date of our territorial possessions, the private fortunes of individuals, and the tribute of India, have generally furnished the capital for exports.”

“ That there is no capital in the hands of the natives, for the extension of exports from India.”

“ And that the vent for European manufactures is limited and incapable of extension, from physical, as well as moral causes.”

Every one of these positions is made out by satisfactory evidence,

by a regular and large export of the first staple article of the country, in a fixed quantity of wrought woollens.* Except in the instance of unwrought metal there is no other branch of export, as relates to the native population of India, that is even worth mention.

The private trade of the Company's maritime officers need not be taken into the account; as it is confined solely to the use and consumption of British subjects, under a licensed residence in India, and for the most part retained in the Company's civil and military service, and to a mere handful of the descendants of foreign Europeans, Portuguese and Dutch, thinly scattered at the different Indian Presidencies. This species of commerce is liable to the same consideration with domestic trade. It is a consumption of our own manufactures by our own subjects, with little modification. It admits not of material increase, and in what it may be increased, it is in so much a diminution of the consumption of the like manufactures at home. If it be thought that the manufactures of India may usurp or supply the place, in some respects, of articles of British workmanship, the advantage may be understood as more than compensated, in the improved ability of European

which would seem irrefragable. *Vide* page 16, *et infra*, of the Supplement to the Appendix to the Fourth Report; and the Letter of the Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the East India Company, to the Right Hon. R. Dundas, p. 13, and onwards, of the papers respecting the negotiation, &c. published by Black and Parry, octavo edition.

* The annual export of woollens exceeds one million. This, though prescribed at first by Charter, has of late been kept up, in a spirit of patriotism, or in the pure bounty of the Company.

residents, from local employment and gains, to purchase and consume a greater quantity of their own native products and commodities, that will have contributed in a larger degree to the benefit of the mother country, by the circumstance and consequence of their transit to India, through the mercantile ~~proposes~~ ^{proposals} which they shall have intermediately answered.

What has been said of the Indian trade, as it regards our own country, is referable to all the countries and states, that have at any time engaged in it. The very genius and nature of the trade forbid any extent of exports. It is the reverse of a trade of barter, or mutation, or exchange of commodities. The history of the Dutch and French adventurers and companies, and of the more recent mercantile schemes of the Americans, is in proof and confirmation of this assertion; which, it is conceived, is not liable to any serious or specious question. Have the old and new worlds, who have kept up a commercial intercourse with India, been alike deceived in the capacity of the trade? All equally blind to the discernment of their own interests in the prosecution of it? Or has any fresh light, and what, broken in upon us from the surrounding cloud of utter and impenetrable darkness? Yes! a new Sun has shone, not on India, but on Britain—not a natural, but a political light, which has discovered the darkness and the error of our ways. A band of political economists, rushing newly from the schools, have attempted to illumine our ignorance, by showing us, that, according to their philosophy, we have mistaken the very nature of the commerce itself, and are most egregiously bewildered in the mode and principle of conducting it. That the field of

commerce is wide and wide enough, but that it is ruined by the manner of cultivation. To see how their axioms are established, it may be necessary to observe on the reasoning, and the facts by which they are supported.

The chief arguments adduced in favour of the capacity of the Indian trade, arise out of principles supposed to be long established, and therefore familiar to commerce in general, without adverting to the dissimilitude of Indian commerce with that of other countries. Much of the fallacy in the arguments that have been offered on the subject, has its origin in the fundamental error of assuming, that the manners, habits, and wants, of the natives of India, are the same with those of the inhabitants of countries, with whom a closer and nearer interest has been maintained in the ordinary commercial course. But one might as well attempt to include all the wants and necessities of every people on the face of the habitable world in one term and description, and to provide for them by a single contrivance, as to lay down any general rule which should apply invariably to all.

There may be modes, it is true, more favourable than others, for facilitating and speeding the slow march of commerce; and these may have been so much approved in their experiment, as to afford the grounds of commercial maxims; but then they all presume, what is not admitted here, as regards our export commerce, the capacity of extensive trade. Particular means may spread and scatter commerce where it previously exists; but they will not create it where it does not.

All barter must depend, it is conceived, on the peculiarity of the parties dealing together, and of their abi-

ty to supply or receive in exchange the surplus produce and manufactures of each other. In the approximation of countries in climate and habits, the commerce, generally speaking, may be supposed to be more wide and complete, and in their relative distance from each other, in one or other of these respects, it will be in the same degree confined and imperfect. In neighbouring or contiguous countries, where the climate is alike, and the products similar, and where customs vary but little, the natural and artificial wants must, in a great measure, be the same, and the mode of providing for them must generally correspond; each will, therefore, have to spare for the other, when it is wanted, more of its natural or manufactured produce, according to its respective means, from some favouring circumstance either of soil, of season, or of population. Such countries, having the same necessities, the same means of life, the same manners, with few essential differences, will have more to dispose of, that is suited to each other's use, in case of need. Here the articles of necessity and luxury are alike convertible to the exigencies of both; and must, therefore, from the accidents and inconveniences of life, be more generally required in exchange. Scarcely any thing of superabundant production, either in growth or labour, but what may be turned to the good of those who possess, or the use of those wanting it. This applies to the condition of the family of European states or nations, relatively with each other, to whom, as their general situation is alike, general rules may be applicable.

With countries distant from one another, such as

Great Britain, China, and India ; of a climate differing from one another, in the nature of its produce ; and of manners, and laws and religions, as opposite as climate ; it is not to be expected that they will have much to exchange with each other, as fitted to each other's use ; nor is there the same facility of supplying to one another what the necessities of each might demand. In export commerce, articles of necessity, whether primary for food, or secondary for convenience, will form the bulk of the trade. The intervening distance between the latter countries and our own, and the perishable nature of what is assignable for the food of man, precludes any wide interchange of the articles of the first necessity : others of convenience are as little transferable between the distinct countries as the primary ones, from the difference of climate and the wants to which it gives rise, as well as from popular manners. In addition to these contravening causes, are to be mentioned the jealous policy of the law in one instance, and religion in the other, co-operating also with the unabating rigour of an unalterable law, which throw their mighty influence into the scale, preponderating already, and will not suffer it to rise to its balance.

The Chinese law shuts the door completely against foreign intercourse, no matter with what view, and with what condescensions it may be sought. The event of the late national embassy is sufficiently declaratory of the fact. The mode, too, of carrying on the little commerce that this extensive empire chooses to allow, through a narrow and distrustful wicket, and this only half opened, may teach one what to look for in a trade

so conducted.* The religion and law of the Hindûs act in the same, though not exactly in so direct and obvious a way. Their religion is law, and the law religion. As the law is understood to be revealed, it will not submit to alteration; but keeps the subjects of it in one undeviating slavery. The Hindu is the same servile, unchanged, and unchangeable creature now, that he was several centuries ago; the obedient child of the law, and participating of the fixed and inveterate habit of the parent. The influence of climate confirms and strengthens the arbitrary dominion of the law. These make and keep him a segregated being from the great body of his kind; fearful of, and flying from, the contact of strangers; and refusing any, and all, direct intercourse. His own soil produces in abundance, and almost without the trouble of culture, all that is necessary to his wants. The fertility of the soil superinduces an unconquerable indolence. Religion, interposing, narrows and limits his wants, and will not permit them, in spite of inclination, to run into excess. His customs and habits are subservient to, and regulated by the law; instead of giving a tone and character to the law itself. An uniform and prescribed food satisfies his appetite,—a thin and unvarying garment covers him from the weather,—his religious ceremonies determine the quality of his clothes. An humble edifice shelters him from the change of season, and the heat of the climate requires that it should be open to the air. The nature of

* It is unnecessary to speak of the nature and peculiarity of the China trade, since it seems generally understood, that it will be left, with very little alteration, on its present footing.

the dwelling precludes costly furniture, and the household utensils conform to the primitive simplicity of the arrangement. The maintenance of this scanty establishment, is also admirably provided for by the policy of the law, in the division of casts;—a distribution, which induces the dependence of individuals on each other, and integrally on themselves, for their constant and unfluctuating support. Whether man in this condition be fitted to help and assist the commerce of a state of society exactly the reverse, would seem scarcely to admit of a question: man, too, not in a barbarous, but a civilized condition, endowed with, and communicating science, exercising the most curious arts, and capable of estimating all the ornaments of life; but excluded from indulgence in them, as it should seem, by the prescription of his charter. Is this a being, it may be asked, who may be drawn into new relations? who may be cheated from his habits and his prejudices, and be taken in the toils of trade? What is the history of our own, and of all other experiments on this singular and extraordinary phenomenon? The Portuguese and Dutch have maintained a friendly understanding with him, it is hardly to be called a trade, even longer than ourselves, and they have made as little progress as ourselves, in moulding him to their commercial purposes. The French, with their well-known pliancy of temper, and peculiar arts of colonization, have endeavoured, in their turn, to make a more fortunate impression, and have experienced an equal disappointment with other European competitors. The Americans, also, have attempted the same thing, and with the same ill success. The scheme, then, has not failed for want of

experiments or perseverance ; but from fixed and immutable causes, that cannot be overcome. Not one of these mercantile and enterprising powers, in an intercourse of two centuries and a half, has been able to introduce into a society, constituted as is the Hindû, the slightest taste or desire, and the reason I have attempted to explain, for the articles of their respective manufactures. None of them, it is admitted, have aimed at the introduction of such a taste through the previous removal, as some of the advocates for free trade would counsel, of the prejudice of religion and native customs. These successive adventurers had seen the country and the people, whom they were desirous of engaging in trade, and were convinced, by their own eyes, of the impracticability of such an attempt ; if they had not been before assured of the impolicy of it, from the known operation of causes and effects. They were content to go on in the smooth and beaten way—to wait for the dispersion of existing popular prejudices through the medium of commercial intercourse—not in the rashness and weakness of the new philosophy, to take prejudices by storm, and convert them in the perverted order of things, into the means instead of the end of commerce. If the adventurers failed in this their practice, they had at least reason and experience in their favour, and will take no shame for the result.

From the failure of these repeated experiments, and from the nature of the European export trade with India, which I have endeavoured to describe, all rational speculation for the extension of exchangeable commerce would seem hopeless and at an end.

Large and unbounded as the field of India is, it is not a recipient for our superabundant produce ; it

affords no vent for our labouring export commeree, nor holds out any fair assurance of success to future attempts or to future adventurers.

The same causes, that put a limit to our exports to India, would seem to interpose a barrier, equally insurmountable, to the advance of our import trade from that country. If the various produce of its soil presents certain articles in commercial demand, they are in general the common growth of other countries, nearer in point of position, or preferable from peculiar policy to our encouragement; or they are of such a nature as to govern and prescribe their own extent. Of the first kind are cotton and sugars, the growth of our West India Islands — of the second may be mentioned indigo, and hemp, and indeed sugar, which would require the outlay of British capital to extend them beyond their present cultivation:* and of the last, spices, drugs and saltpetre,

* They who recommend the cultivation of the Export Trade from India, to a farther extent than as at present practised, by the pursuit of new branches of Commerce, would do well to deliberate on the following passage, in the Supplement to the Appendix to the Fourth Report. Page 20.

“ But the grand objection of a Commercial nature to this new Trade, is that a *considerable capital* must be *transferred* from *Great Britain* to *carry it on*. In one of the Papers from Bengal, it is hypothetically stated, that in a few years the Export of Sugar, from that Country, might be raised to 100,000 tons. Doubtless, in a vast extent of fertile soil, stretching from the sea almost to Delhi, it may be possible to carry the culture of Sugar, and various other articles, to a very great length; and persons, unacquainted with the circumstances of that Country, might imagine, from reading such a Statement, that the main thing to be done, was, only to open the door wide enough for Exportation. The fact, however, is, that four or five Millions Sterling from this Country must be furnished, to pay for the *first cost*, and the *transportation* of that quantity of Sugar; for Bengal has no such fund

certainly valuable articles, but of little bulk, and necessarily limited in use, form the most material part; and could afford not much employment, either for our merchants or our ships. The general inapplicability of Indian produce to European consumption, and the expence of carriage, from the circumstance of distance between the country growing, and the country consuming it, will allow of the importation of few, if any articles, into Europe, beyond those enumerated.

The Manufactures of India, in European demand, or adapted to European consumption, lie in as narrow a compass as the natural produce. These are piece-goods, chintzes, and muslins; articles of manufacture common to European, as well as Indian states, and, therefore, as coming into competition with domestic manufacture, not likely to receive any preference, so as to increase the present demand for them. If, contrary to the obvious policy of the European states, these articles should be preferred to like articles of home manufacture, it might even be doubted, notwithstanding the all-devouring dictum of political œconomists, whether the supply, from the stubborn nature of the Hindû people, could be rendered commensurate with the demand. The artificers of India, like all other casts, have their peculiar destination, and are so distributed and disposed, as to answer the views of the great system by which they are governed. The Hindû constitution is a kind of patriarchal institution, by which the members are made to administer to the wants and conveniences of the family of its own, applicable to any purpose of that kind; and the same observation must be applied to any large extension of other new ARTICLES."

association, and their offices are confined, as it were, under the roof of the little republic, and with an aspect purely to its needs. The weaver, and every other description of mechanic, the farmer, the dealer, and the labourer, forms a distinct and separate class, bearing a relative proportion to one another, in respect to numbers and employments, which he is appointed to fulfil, and the ends he is intended to serve. Every one of these has a mark and an indelible character impressed upon him, which cannot be erased. Each is doomed to labour in the walk allotted to him, from generation to generation. It is as impossible to escape from one cast to another, as to exchange the occupation that gives the designation and name to the cast, by which it is known. The skill and art, and labour of one cast is not transferable, therefore, in aid and assistance of another.* A great excess of any one given manufacture, over the present supply, cannot of consequence be expected; not on account of any niggardliness of nature, in the produce of materials, but from the state of man, whose hand

* It is remarked in a recent publication, treating incidentally on this subject, that the labour of certain mechanics might be convertible, with proper care, to other pursuits, than to which it is devoted by the unyielding law of cast, and by means of a very simple stratagem; which is no other, than by prevailing on some principal members of the tribe in requisition, to set an example to their subordinates, when the work would be done. The device is certainly new, and curious enough: but unfortunately the contrivance is not specified by which the conversion of the principals is to be effected. And until this very necessary operation be revealed, it may consist with common understanding to suppose, that the heads of casts may possibly be found as inveterate in their prejudices as their inferiors, and may have fewer inducements, proceeding on common calculation, for quitting their assigned station.

alone can shape them into form. The condition of manufactures, as every thing else in this singular scheme of government, is fated to be stationary.

The value placed on particular artificers and their labours, and the impossibility of supplying their place, is in some sort shewn by the endless differences that are known to arise among bordering states, from the reception and entertainment of the respective artists and mechanics of each other, which not unfrequently terminate in extreme acts of hostility.

Causes and circumstances, such as these, familiarly known to those, who have any knowledge of India or her affairs, must keep the import trade from our Indian possessions, as the export commerce, on a narrow and unimproveable scale.

There are persons, however, on this side the water, who do not venture to dispute the facts on which the immediate conclusion is founded, yet scruple not to call in question the conclusion itself. These affirm, that the limitation of the existing Indian trade, which is admitted, is not owing to any natural obstacle in the way of the trade itself, but to the manner in which it is conducted, that defies all improvement. It would be absurd, say they, to pronounce on the capability and value of our Indian commerce, from the unwise course, the confined stream, in which it has been permitted to flow. Would you take the account, they exclaim, of the East India Company; which is nothing more than a recital of misadventures, from its own mismanagement, and its own incapacity for trade, as a true criterion of judging what the Indian trade might be in the hands of other persons? Then follows a tirade, a never-tiring tirade against mono-

poly and monopolists, as if to the condition of the Company, and not to physical and political causes, were imputable, all the defects and evils about which they rail.

I have already stated, all that is felt to be necessary to urge in refutation of the principal allegation against the Company's monopoly, by shewing that it was the only mean devisable in the wisdom of the legislature, for managing the trade of India, and had been made subservient in every stage of its progress, in contradistinction of all other monopolies, to the public benefit, which ever had been preferred to the particular good of the Company. I shall only offer, at present, a short remark or two, on the glaring effects of the monopoly, in the estimation of the impugnors of the Company's Charter, and their agency.

It is argued that there is a carelessness and indolence in all joint stock Companies, that check the enterprise and efforts necessary for the spread and establishment of commerce: and that there is, moreover, an extravagance in all their concerns, that renders their success, whatever that may be, when compared with the proceedings of individuals, unprofitable in the issue.

It would seem not quite fair or equitable to consider the trade of the East India Company as a pure monopoly, or to apply those principles to it, or to reason upon it, as an establishment of that description. For the English East India Company; and, indeed, all foreign Companies of a like nature, though savouring of monopoly, have yet allowed, for the most part, a private trade to co-exist with their own: so that the exertions of individuals, and, in respect to the English East India Com-

pany, on a somewhat extensive scale, have co-operated with the Company's endeavours, but hitherto without any notable effect, to enlarge our Indian commerce. At particular seasons the whole mercantile community have been admitted as sharers in the speculation : at other times the different and distinct members of the Company have enjoyed, and have used the liberty of separate, with their privilege of a combined trade ; and, at *all* periods, in the history of Indian commerce, the officers of the Company's marine, partaking of a commercial character, improved by local knowledge, have been permitted to carry on, if not rival, at least congenial speculations with those of their employers. All these united and separate means have been called into use ; and, if they have proved unavailing, we must look to some other cause than indolence to account for the event.

Such is the monopoly of the East India Company in practice ; and it might be inferred, and probably with truth, that if the public had been generally permitted to trade with India on unlimited principles, instead of the calumniated monopolists, it might not have been disposed to make equal efforts, or, if disposed, might not have sped equally in its purpose with the East India Company.

If the scheme of open trade has not yet been put for any length of time to the experiment, the principle has been sufficiently essayed and acted on, in the commercial transactions of the several officers in the Company's naval service, to shew what it is capable of. Individual industry has in this way been submitted to the test, with all the stimulus which individual gain, or the hope of it, will inspire, and its achievements are notorious. How has it promoted the interests of the trade ?

How has it answered the views of individuals? These private adventures have been conducted on the most advantageous plan ; free from the incumbrance and burthen of outward and homeward freight, no inconsiderable bounty, it may be thought, to liberal speculation. Yet, with all these appurtenances and means to boot, the trade of India is now, with little difference, what it was some centuries ago. The persons, of whom I am now speaking, are not strangers to commerce, but have been schooled in it from their infancy. They are not foreigners by birth or habit : they are merchants in every sense of the word, English merchants : they have the same intelligence, the same spirit, the same enterprise, with the most enlightened, the most liberal, and the most adventurous of their fellow merchants. Shall it be permitted to the latter to tell them that they are dolts in their profession, or that they want the common energies which characterise the universal body of their countrymen ? So far as concerns this particular class of merchants, then, the spirit of individual energy has been drawn out, and its effect has been ascertained. Of the same materials with them, the British mercantile body is constituted, and from the application of the same power, the same operation may again be expected ; it is unreasonable to expect any other. You may increase the scale of action, but the bearing of it will be the same, the degree alone will be different. I am not inclined to pass over some disabilities under which this description of personages labour, in relation to their ships and their masters. They are, it is true, directed and confined in their speculations, by the will of their employers, and by the destination of the voyage. Their endeavours are chained, as it were, to

the sea-coast, and the different ports of India. This, undoubtedly, is the fact. They have not, however, been fixed to an unvaried spot ; but have shifted their position, in the circle of their employment, through the whole round of the territory, from the nearest to the most distant point of the Company's possessions. Where, it may be asked, could a more eligible opening to commerce afford itself, than in the very spots to which these officers are sent ? At which a large body of licensed British traders, unconnected with the East India Company, are also domiciled. This is the very seat, of all others, at which commerce may be expected to commence ; and whence it must diverge, in a natural channel, to other parts of the Peninsula. The native inhabitants must be more social here, and less disinclined to commerce, than in the interior of India. Trade must flourish here, if it can take root any where. From the willingness of the soil here, if it should be found kind, we might anticipate its quality in other places.

A constant and unceasing trade has been maintained for more than two centuries with the settlements on the several coasts of India, not only by the English, but other foreign companies, and residents, who have stocked their markets, as their several interests would dictate, with all the commodities that were likely to satisfy the wants, or gratify the acquired taste of the natives, who had been prepared for the reception of such commodities, by long acquaintance with, and observation of, European manners, and the improved means and luxuries of their life. And what is the event of this history ? Why,—except in two scant articles that have been partially introduced, the natives have rejected all our offers and

temptations. Is it that our proffered merchandize came not reasonably, in point of charge, to their hands? The markets, it may be observed, have at times been supplied to a satiety, or over-glutted. Articles of European produce have often fallen on that account far below the prime cost, and still they have not seduced, in this most inviting shape, a solitary native to become a consumer of our commerce.

Have our own East India Company, with all the foreign mercantile societies who have ever set foot in India, made no enquiry, or had no opportunity of informing themselves of the articles which might be useful or exchangeable in native commerce? Or have they all, unaccountably, dropped down on places, where the natives, different from the body of the inhabitants of the Peninsula, have neither wants for foreign produce, nor the capacity for trade? Should these several adventurers have neglected every means of personal information; a knowledge of this sort would have imperceptibly impressed itself, in a long and continued intercourse, by the discovered wants of the natives, and in the manifested desire to satisfy them. These rather, than invitation, or the winning courtesies and arts of trade, form the first and most important foundation of commerce on any large field. Such adventurers cannot, therefore, be imagined as wholly ignorant, at this day, of the commercial exigencies of India, much less can they be supposed to have been led into any very striking error, as to the local situations adapted to their views; for, fall where they would, they must have lighted among men, the expected consumers of their exports, of one and the same character.

If there be any people less variable than others in their wants, their habits, and their prejudices, it is the mass of the people of the East. When you contemplate the one, you have the whole race before you. A complete family likeness pervades the entire human species. The natives on the coast are the same with the natives every where else. If the first have been able to discover what their own wants are, they are acquainted, necessarily, with the wants of their kind in the whole breadth and length, the square and the circumference of India. If the European adventurer should heedlessly overlook the circumstance of those wants, or omit to govern his speculation by them, it would not be very probable, if any commercial understanding or talent be presumed to be among the acquisitions or properties of the native, that he also would be guilty of the same fault, or would fail to benefit by the omission. Now, whatever unfitness or disinclination there may be in the native character to foreign commerce, there is a peculiar fitness in it, and a curious determination towards internal or domestic trade. A more zealous, patient, persevering, and economical commercialist than the native trader, cannot be imagined. Shew him the least prospect of success, the slightest hope of profit, and he is to be engaged, either as a principal, or a willing and active agent, in any and every branch of trade. He is, from this very disposition, I speak from some experience, the constant instrument, the great and invariable promoter of European commerce. He will buy with you—he will sell with you—he will do any thing, but be the consumer of your merchandize.

To see how far the native propensity to trade may

be carried, it is needful only to refer to the well-known, incontrovertible, though scarcely credible, fact, that he will put on the character of a dealer in European commodities, not with the vain and fruitless expectation of selling his goods to his native brethren, for he knows how vain and bootless the expectation would be, but for the purpose of re-selling, what he has bought from Europeans, to Europeans—from the non-resident to the resident. Thus he becomes, in the true spirit of trade, the second-hand vender, the retailer, and even huckster, of European produce to European consumers. There is not a settlement of British India, nay, scarcely a cantonment, but what exhibits one or more of these examples of this aptitude and eagerness for trade. It may be added, too, that there is scarcely a bazar, or market, in the Peninsula, but what hangs out, in its alluring display, to catch the eye of the passenger, the unheeded temptation of European manufactures.

It will be seen, from these notorious facts, that arts enough have been tried to clear and improve the way for the introduction of British exports : and it will not be doubted, that the same industrious agents, who are so busy and so anxious for the accomplishment of British objects, are equally active in the service and promotion of their own ; that, knowing our demands, and their own ability to supply them, we may allow them credit for drawing, under the stimulus of gain, as largely and deeply from their resources, as the resources are competent to answer.

It is only justice to the East India Company to notice, that they have not been wanting to themselves or to the country, in co-operation with the spirit and energy

of their native subjects, in endeavouring to discover and profit by all the gifts of nature, in this her most genial and productive region, as well as the efforts and works of art. The many commercial progresses, made under the Company's auspices, or their more immediate direction, throughout their old and new territorial acquisitions, and in the bordering countries, on every side of their dominions, are in proof of their desire to extend the confines of their commerce. The published reports and records of these peaceful embassies, afford the same impressive evidence of the liberality in which these discoveries were sought. Not a part of the vast possessions of the Company has been left unexplored, and its productive powers have been alike laid open, in a fearless confidence, to the naturalist, the merchant, and the politician. It would be difficult to point to any geographical division of India, of which the public have not already an accurate and digested account of what it has to offer in natural bounty, or the improvement of art. That these various stores have not been neglected, when found, the most undeniable proof is afforded, in the fullness of the Company's warehouses; and too convincing a memorial of the superabundance of the supply to European demand, is to be discovered in the stagnate state of its consumption. If more articles were imported, in the present posture of export commerce, what other end could they serve, than to increase a stock, which is already a burthen?

What is there, it may be enquired, that has not been attempted to render India commercially profitable to Britain? What has India to give, that is not now enjoyed in ample provision? What is there in the most

sanguine expectation of the most sanguine speculatist, that he would recommend to be adopted?

I have not been able to collect from the most warm opposer of the Company's Charter, the most wild projector in the new school of commercial policy, in what he really looks for benefit from an open and free trade. He talks loudly and unweariedly of the unbounded capabilities of the soil, of the countless numbers of its people, and of the immense riches which both might be made to yield. But however eloquent on his general plan and prospect, he is absolutely mute on every subject connected with the realisation of his scheme. He favours us not with any enumeration of the objects of his contemplated exports, or the nature and extent of his returns. He explains not his methods for converting an impracticable people into the obedient instruments of his interests and his will.—He condescends not to go into the tedious, intricate labyrinths of detail—but takes it for granted that his proposition is irrefragable, and that nothing else is wanted, but to cast down the barrier against European ingress into India, when all the flatteries of his golden dreams will be substantiated. It will not suit with the ardour of his temperament, to delay his rich harvest, until he shall have satisfied his landlords, the Parliament of Great Britain, how he intends to use the field and the implements, which he is desirous that they should take from the Company, to entrust to his better management. No task could be more irksome, than to ask of him, how he means to cultivate the soil—and to what ends, even in his own imagination, it will conduce. These circumstances must be taken into the serious consideration of Parliament,

though they do not, unaccountably, enter into the present views of other parties. Zeal may be the feature of one; but prudence and discretion is the distinguishing characteristic of the other. Parliament will not disturb the settled state of things, without knowing that the change, which is solicited, be for the benefit of the country; and that the benefit will be certain and constant.

The suggestion, perhaps, of a few pertinent questions, as to what the Reformists *specifically* want, and how they intend to compass it, would be decisive of the question, whether the Charter should be renewed or not. The East India Company might safely trust the event to such a test.

There are Quixottes in commerce as well as chivalry, who would sail on a voyage of discovery, for the purpose of attacking and subduing monsters, not the indigenuous inhabitants of the jungles and the forests, numerous enough in nature, but the creatures of a clouded and fevered imagination: these disturbed minds are eager to commit themselves to the vasty deep, in quest of wondrous adventures, if their friends, or the law, will suffer them to roam at large. Some commercial Quacks, too, not quite so mad, but fully as desperate, as these: ~~the~~ deluded beings, would free the trade from all existing obstructions, by a bold nostrum, by a "kill or cure" practice, without once bestowing a thought on the organic formation, the physical imperfection of the body, on which they would try their powers. Ignorant of general principles, narrowed in the scope of their enquiries, and fearless about consequences, these empyrics would handle without caution, what a regular and skilful

physician would tremble to touch* he is too well acquainted with the history of his profession, the true principles of his science, and the value of his character, to force a remedy which has been carried as far, as a watchful and observant practice dare venture to apply it; where there is no encouraging probability of effecting further good, and where the prescription, if it should be as operative as might be desired, would be more speedily destructive, than the continuance of the evil; when the patient, though he might escape the disease, would be dispatched by the fate-disposing dose of the doctor.

One might think, that the effect of an open trade with India has been sufficiently ascertained; in the instance of the American trade; though it be not exactly analogous to a common trade, under the conduct of the unlimited members of our own mercantile community. America, it is known, has maintained for several years a trade with the different coasts of India, by virtue of a treaty concluded by her with the British court, and she has yet to look for any considerable advantage from her exports; or any addition to her importable articles from that country. To break the force of the inference from the first circumstance, it is said, that America is not, like England, a manufacturing country, and, therefore, has but few objects of export. But does she maintain no commercial relation with manufacturing countries, with which she might barter her marketable produce in the Western world, in return for articles in supposed demand in the East? Is there no benefit, individually or nationally, to be derived, from this compound species of commerce? Is not America in the actual habit of resorting to this intermediate course of trade, in the

export of articles of European consumption? * If she confines herself solely to these, the conclusion is inevitable; that the market of India is not open to any other. The presumption, arising out of the fact of her present imports from India, which are stated to be on a large scale, is mainly to be repelled by a reference to the peculiarity of the present times, and to the immediate restricted condition of British commerce; as also to the influence of privileges enjoyed by America, originating in her national and neutral character; privileges of a temporary nature, and answering but a temporary purpose. These circumstances afford not any ground for argument, either in favour of the latitude of the export or the import commerce of India. America has leapt, by a fortuitous and fortunate state of things, into the seat of the East India Company; but she fills it only on sufferance, and must yield it up, the instant that circumstances permit the resumption of it. The neutral American, in the interim, dispenses, what the East India Company, partaking of the quality of a belligerent, is not allowed to dispense; and what the English merchant, equally with the Company, would be excluded from dispensing. It would not be easy to draw an inference, operating one way or other on the East India Company, that would not fall with the like pressure, be it more or less, on the body of British merchants.

The American trade, proceeding, as it does, on a fortunate and temporary contingency, can decide nothing in consideration of the general question, of what the trade

* The Madeira, consumed in India, is chiefly imported by Americans.

is susceptible, or of the policy by which it should be governed. The question must be determined not on fancied analogies, but on established facts and reasonings, directly referable to the subject, and about which there can be no dispute.

It would be insulting to your understanding to repeat, what has been before remarked, on the nature and history of our Indian commerce; which, whatever its character at the beginning, at this day depends essentially, as has been shewn, on our local territorial dominion. This, from the very numerical amount of those, over whom it is exercised, must be taken to spring from the favourable opinion of the subject people of our imaginary power, if not of our actual or relative force. Does not this universally-admitted fact meet the enquiry in its teeth, and challenge a discussion by itself, preliminary to an investigation into pretended popular rights, that the legislature has hitherto controlled?

The necessity of preserving and continuing this empire of opinion must be apparent, even to those, whose ungovernable impetuosity would destroy it. How, it may be enquired, is this favourable impression to be kept up, with the introduction of the British population into India, bent on gain alone, and with the importation at the same time of all the stratagems and wiles of trade, calculated to insure it? What opinion would be entertained of the victors of the Mahomedan conquerors, the successors of the ancient, the rivals of the modern Alexander, if stooping from their state and superiority, they should dwindle down at once to the degree of petty and squabbling shopkeepers? Spare us the mortifying sight of seeing a constituent part of the sovereignty of India,

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The opium consumed in India, is chiefly imported by Americans.

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The necessity of preserving and continuing this empire of opinion must be apparent, even to those, whose ungovernable impetuosity would destroy it. How, it may be enquired, is this favourable impression to be kept up, with the introduction of the British population into India, bent on gain alone, and with the importation at the same time of all the vices and wilks of trade, calculated to invert it? What opinion would be entertained of the victors of the Marathas, the conquerors, the successors of the ancient, the rivals of the emperors Alexander, if, stripping from their arms and uniforms, they should drink the wine of sensuality, the flagon of envy, and squabbling philosophies; if, in the smothering night of seeing a constituted part of the sovereignty of India

the materials of which the whole is composed, with a pack or wallet on his back, traversing the country which he ruled, and with a paltry, pedlar-like spirit, soliciting the encouragement of customers, and prying for an opportunity of sordid profit, in a forced barter of unadapted and unaccommodating commodities! If the outward bearing of the East India Company shall be thought above their mercantile condition; this, the opposite and reverse of their conduct, but the natural consequence of separate trade, would be as much below and incompatible with the condition of those, who should expect to maintain a rule, which is, and only can be sustained by opinion and reputation.

I have submitted to you, what I intended from the beginning, a rough and general outline of the East India Company's trade, and have explained the original peculiarity, the subsequent modifications, and the mode of prosecuting it; and I have endeavoured to shew that it is a trade of an unique character, introduced by singular circumstances; not so much by the arts and instruments of peace, as by the power and influence of the sword: that it has preserved throughout the mixed quality with which it was primitively impressed: that it was never regarded either by statesmen or the legislature, as of great substantive importance, but as a relative good: that it is limited in its nature, and incapable of artificial extent: that it has been cultivated in the way, which in the sense and wisdom of the legislature, it is most profitable to conduct it, with a view to its preservation, and to its utility to the genuine interests of the country: that all the speculations of rendering it more productive, are founded in misapprehension of its prin-

ciples, as well as of the manner in which it is carried on: and that the evils ascribed to the mode of managing it, are imputable to the organism of the trade itself. In the proportion that I shall have succeeded in my design, I shall have furnished an answer to the objections, which I wish not unnecessarily to combat, that are imagined to spring out of the particular constitution of the East India Company. The object is large enough in itself, without encumbering it with superfluous matter.

There are, however, one or two exceptions, somewhat incompatible in their tendency, that are urged with so peculiar a pertinacity against the Company, that I may be excused in glancing at them. The first presumes the incompetency of the Company, from the instruments employed by them, or their neglect, from nearer and preferable considerations, of the objects of commerce, to improve its interests, so far as they may be carried. The latter infers, with an opposite aspect, that the prodigal waste of the Company's Asiatic establishments, swallows up the enormous profits of a trade, already large and luxuriant, and however it might be extended. In laying the ground of these strange and seemingly contradictory objections, it is stated, in substance, that the 'servants of the East India Company, as their masters, are alike intent on forwarding the ends of sovereignty, at the expence of commerce: that the aim and interests of all parties, no matter what the direction and destination of their service, whether military or civil, political or commercial, is to extend the local limits of the state, at all and every hazard. It is from the increase of territory alone, as the objection assumes, that the views of all can be fulfilled.

having relation to the Company's profit, purely, they will reflect, that what is lost to the Company is not, consequently, lost to the state; but that which passes not, out of an excess of liberality, into the Company's treasury, goes into the pockets of its servants, and in that way ministers, in as certain a channel, to the accumulate wealth of the mother country.

The opposers of the Company's Charter, who can and will see nothing advantageous in its constitution, would seem to err in this as in every other instance. They who have nothing before their eyes, and in their wishes, but the gains and profits of trade, as resultive from our Eastern possessions, may naturally wish to square their arrangements, by the same narrow notions and passions that exorb their thoughts, and engross their hearts. But men, who are bound to look beyond themselves, will descry, perhaps, even in these reviled establishments, more real national advantage, than could possibly have been produced by all the energies of commerce, however successfully applied.

A mere view of the numbers of those comprehended in the different establishments of the Company, will give a tolerable idea of their relative importance and consequence above the ordinary fruit of trade. The latter is a single, and not always a cultivated object, in the numerous states that have come under the dominion of the Company, and has formed, from the nature of the people, and their constitution, both formerly and now, but a small part of the wealth of the respective states; while the issues from the territory, in revenue and produce, constitute the main riches, and supply the most material employment, and serve the most lucrative

ends to the government presiding over them. Now the whole amount of the revenue, direct or indirect, is collected, converted, and consolidated into money, by the hands of the European servants of the Company. The protection and defence of the countries themselves, yielding this mixed and incalculable amount, are at the Company's entire management ; and every one of the departments of state, in a civil as well as military relation, too numerous to be particularized, is filled by officers of the Company's appointment. All the functionaries of these different descriptions are provided for, in the singular scheme of our Eastern government, out of the rents of the territorial acquisitions : the collection and the wide application of these, which naturally would have formed occupations for, and afforded the means of enriching many thousands of the native subjects of such countries, are politically appropriated, as so many separate fields for the promotion of the fortunes of our own countrymen. From these abundant and fruitful sources, above 3000 European officers of a military description, and some hundreds of civil servants, are directly and constantly maintained, and from the liberal scale of their stipends and emoluments, are enabled to lay the foundation of successive and accumulative fortunes ; to be communicated to the wealth, and spent within the body of the mother country. In this way, a large proportion of her own industrious and enterprising progeny finds the means of subsistence and advancement, from other provisions than her own ; and instead of subtracting any thing from the public stock, is, by a felicitous arrangement, rendered serviceable to the increase of the common fund. Hence, wealth is perpetually rolling into

the parent state from our Indian possessions ; supplying the natural waste ; increasing the general store ; and affording, in so much new capital, the germ of further increase. Thus is India to be considered in the most valuable and precious relation to Great Britain,* and so has she ever been contemplated by the eye of the statesman and politician.

I would not, however, be supposed as desirous of throwing any disparagement on the value of our Eastern commerce, though I assign not to it the first place among the benefits derived from the existing Indian system. I do not lose sight of the annual millions, which it is the easy mean of raising, toward the support of the burthen of the state ; but this circumstance does not render me blind to the manner in which that mean is aided, through the private channels of individual acquisitions in the East ; and in the very act of bringing them to our shores, as well as the ulterior services which they effect, when absolutely arrived there, in their reproductive quality, to the interests of the country. Each of these advantages would be admirable enough in itself, if it had no rival benefit opposed to it ; but they together form, like the mixed system, out of which they spring, the most stupendous work of human policy, approved by the experience of ages, adapting itself to intervenient circumstances, and improving in its course to perfection, by yielding to the discovered exigencies of the season and the system.

* This is happily enforced in the Letter of the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, of the 2d April, 1800 ; page 3 of the Supplement to the 4th Report.

If I have spoken of the simple motion of this vast machine, in external application chiefly, it is from a supposition, that its uses and properties at home must be self-evident, and obvious to the least inquisitive and observant mind. Negligent and careless as men may actually or impliedly be, in all that relates to India and her affairs, it will be impossible for them to shut their eyes to one of the incidents arising out of the Indian system, as discoverable at our homes, in the tens of thousands of the British population, to whom it presents a constant and never varying support.*

He who would throw so wonderful a piece of mechanism out of order, without well considering the effect upon the machine itself, and on the ends which it is designed to fulfil, as well as on the powers to be substituted to bring about the same or meliorated purposes, would be guilty of a rashness, which could not be defended by any present policy, or justified by subsequent success. That the existing system may have its defects, is not intended to be disputed. Let these be pointed out, and the requisite amendments made: but let us not begin by destruction, by condemning the whole arrangement, because it is not perfect, (what human institution is?) in all its parts.

It may be thought, (and some profound politicians have been of that opinion,) that the Indian system does not sufficiently provide, or does not constantly insure, from the applicability, or necessity of applying the Company's capital to the exigencies of the territory as well

* These are stated in round numbers at 30,000 persons. Page 144 of the Papers respecting the Negotiation.

as trade, so many imports from India, as its resources may conveniently or ordinarily spare. Though the present circumstances of European commerce render this no very déplorable evil; yet other seasons may ensue, which may cause it to be viewed in such a light. It would not be prudent, or safe, perhaps, to deny, in the face of such authorities, that temporary inconveniences have happened, from this alleged defect in the existing Indian system, and that it may be wise to prevent, by a precautionary policy, in a new provision in the coming Charter, the possible recurrence of them in the time to come. But deferring, as I am bound to defer, to the wisdom and experience of these statesmen, I should be still indisposed to carry reformation beyond the single evil stated, or any remedial measure beyond the strict letter of their prescription. If it be necessary at certain, or at all seasons, to permit a competition with the East India Company, in bringing the produce and manufactures of India to our ports, and by other carriage than the Company's regular and chartered ships, both the parties and means of supplying what is supposed to be imperfect in the system, will be found in European covenanted and licensed residents in India, and the local shipping, for answering the particular policy of these statesmen,* without endangering our foreign interests.

* The reader is referred for more particular information on this branch of the subject, to the Letters of the Right Hon. Henry Dundas, of the 2d April, 1800, and 21st March, 1801. And of the Marquis Wellesley of the 50th September, 1800, at pages 3, and 29, and at page 31, of the Appendix to the Supplement to the 4th Report of the House of Commons.

by the introduction of new persons, with new relations, and with opposite and opposing views. If the will of parliament shall be in unison with the advice and counsel of the cautious and practical politicians, to whom I allude, it may not be a work of any great difficulty or change, or of any material interference with settled principles, to make the requisite alterations in the system ; a few regulations, to be concerted between the Board of Trade and the Company's government abroad, being all that would seem necessary for so limited a purpose. The state, however, of European commerce, at this moment, is not exactly suited for the introduction even of this moderate change.

If I am slow to touch a system, and with a trembling hand, which has produced, and is still producing so much national good, I may be understood to discountenance and deprecate with the whole of my humble efforts, that wild and indiscriminate spirit of reformation, that has been avowed by the mercantile community, and which has been spread, through their influence and cries, so widely and diffusedly among the people, till it appears to have embodied and ranged them, in a temporary delusion, under one and the same banner. Destruction is the watch-word, and the maddening multitude await only the command, to prostrate with the eastern possessions, the Company's very warehouses with the dust. Is there no warning voice to sway them from a purpose, as unjust as it is unnatural ? Is there no tongue persuasive enough to gain a moment's respite—a pause for speech—to win the deluded crowd from its error, or to plead the humble merits of the Company, in extenuation of its dazzling faults ? The most modest and timid advocate may, surely,

lay claim for the Company to the virtue of having founded and established our eastern trade and Asiatic possessions, (such, such as they are !) and of having rendered them, in a sparing measure, perhaps, useful and advantageous to the mother country ! If the Company's ministry has not been so wise to its own interests, or so profitable, as it might have been, to the State, let us hear, at least, before we give it up for lost, how many and what have been its mighty errors, and how they are intended to be amended by those, who would jump into its place ! Let us hear, how our manufacturing and commercial politicians would cultivate the commerce, and improve the system of Indian Government, before they be snatched at once, and beyond redemption, from the possession in which they are, and put, for experiment sake, into bold and untried hands. They may condescend, perhaps, to tell us, if the boon be not unreasonable, how and when they themselves expect success from the plans which they have in perfection or conception, or, if they are not yet conceived, what they possibly may be expected to form in the course and progress of the experiment ; so that if we be satisfied not with the prospect of their present views, we may not be without hope of their future policy for the management of those great interests, with which, they diffidently seek to be indulged ; and at so great and imminent a risk, and, as respects the Company, and the Country, at so immediate and inevitable a loss, that nothing but the most important and certain prospective advantages could allow us even to look upon !

The present benefit of our Indian trade and possessions is of too solid and too interesting a character to

be renounced, on the demand of misguided speculatists, or ill-advised claimants, who know not what they would seek, nor comprehend what they ask.

I will not detain you by a recapitulation of facts, and arguments, that have presented themselves progressively to my own mind, and which I have endeavoured to impress on your's, in hope of shewing the nature, the importance, and the capacity of our commerce, in conjunction and relation with our Indian territory—the advantages that they produce together, and the limit beyond which they cannot pass. If these satisfy us not with their present good, they may, if properly weighed, and thoroughly understood, protect us from future evil, in dissuading the legislature from sanctioning an innovation that must injure and cannot serve.

The fairest portion of Asia is now in our complete tenure, with its immense revenues and entire trade, and both are made to contribute, to the extent of their several means, through the instrumentality of the East India Company, to the necessities and exigencies of Britain; when it is proposed, in an extravagant and ill-considered scheme, to dissolve an union of interests, that are beneficially knit together, and which, in constant alternation, in their blended form, have reciprocated the most essential services to one another, for the purpose of trying whether they can exist apart. Needs there any one to counsel against the folly of the attempt to divide interests, which, if not united by nature, have become so rivetted by time, by habit, and by circumstance, that if they should survive the act of separation, it is not probable that they can long exist in a single and independent state?

The immediate effects of such an experiment on the

existing system of Asiatic Government, on India, and its people—as well as on the revenues, and, possibly, on the constitution of the mother country, are too significant to be overlooked, and too fearful to be dissembled.

It would seem as impossible to disjoin a free and open trade, with the necessary influx of British property, and British subjects, from the colonization of India; as to sever the idea of colonization, from the independence of the Indian territory, with all the alarming consequences in its train.* Equally impracticable would it be, in contemplating the effects of the meditated change at home, to distinguish between the destruction of the Company's trade, and the diminution of the national resources, in an enormous loss of revenue, and an in-

* The report of the Special Committee, so often alluded to, is full, comprehensive, and authoritative, on this head. After stating that the Company's extensive civil and military establishments have attracted multitudes, not in the service, to repair to their settlements, the report thus proceeds to describe the general effects of an open trade;

"New enlargements of the intercourse, it is obvious, would exceedingly augment their number; the vast capital and shipping of this country, with the natural relations subsisting between it and India, all peculiar to itself, would at once pour in tides of men and money there: the sanction of any public acts at home, would, of course, dispose the governments abroad to afford the commercial encouragements there, which would correspond with the spirit of enlargement adopted here. the public opinion of a great European society, formed in this spirit, would have an influence on the sentiments of those governments; through the medium of natives, who, lands might be extensively occupied by Europeans; and the genius of this system, without any formed plan, would gradually and insensibly antiquate the present one, and become impatient for all the rights of British colonists; to give or to refuse which, would then be a most momentous question." Page 12.—See also page 21.

tolerable addition to its charge. These results are not less luminously than satisfactorily stated, by the Executive of the East India Company, and deduced from so many, such notorious, and such incontrovertible facts, detailed in the correspondence with the Board of Controul, that it would be supererogation to reiterate the proofs on which they rest, or the arguments to which they lead.* These results are fully developed to the public eye, and exposed, in official statements, already on the table of the House of Commons. If they prevail not in making proselytes of the people from an erroneous and obstinate opinion, they cannot fail, from the force of conviction on sound and well-informed minds, to engage their representatives in a mediation between the people's prejudices and their true interests; to the prevention of an evil, as dangerous to the state, as it would be ruinous to an useful and valuable body of men.

* A free trade to and from India, and to unlimited ports, would be subversive of the benefits derived by the Company from the China trade, to the amount of one million annually; destructive of the revenue arising from the importation of tea, to the annual extent of nearly four millions sterling; productive of increase in the number, influence, and expence of revenue officers, with a proportionable decrease in the exports of woollens and metals from Great Britain, and a consequent irremediable loss to the breeding, clothing, and manning countries. These would be the immediate effects of an open trade, with numberless remote evil consequences, which are too plainly described, and clearly deduced from facts, incapable of refutation, detailed in the letter of the deputation of the Court of Directors to the Right Honourable the Earl of Buckinghamshire, of the 29th of April, 1812. Vid. Page 138 of the *Papers* respecting the *Negotiation*.

THE END.

